

الجمعة 23 مايو 1996

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Best
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Thursday May 23 1996

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Almaty L 2.20	London L 1.00	Palau P 1.50
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Mike Leigh's Secrets and Lies reviewed

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"Never give up unless you are just on the last little drop of life you have in you"



Jaymee Bowen with her father David on the day her identity was revealed. 'Jaymee has always had a special place in my heart because she was my first child,' he said later

Edward Pilkington and Chris Millar

Her name was Jaymee Bowen, but she will probably always be remembered as Child B. After six years struggling against cancer, she got close to making it. A month ago observers were speculating that in six months her chances of survival were promising

AT 9.40pm on Tuesday night, while much of the nation was watching the latest episode of Murder One, a drama of a different sort was reaching its conclusion. A girl aged 11 was letting go after a six-year fight.

Her name was Jaymee Bowen, but she will probably always be remembered as Child B. And that pseudonym will probably always be seen as a symbol of a youthful determination to live.

The name was imposed by the courts in an attempt to preserve her anonymity and allow her to lead as normal an existence as she could for the little time she had left. The plan failed. Jaymee's life was not normal.

It wasn't just that she threatened to whack an NHS executive after he refused to pay for further treatment for the leukaemia that was killing her. Nor that she prompted deep soul-searching within the health service over its approach to patients diagnosed as terminally ill.

It was that in the face of repeated radiation treatment and courses of chemotherapy, with their horrible side-effects, she fought so patiently, for so long, and so hard.

She got close to making it. A month ago observers were speculating that if she lasted another six months her chances of long-term survival were good.

Then last week she began to experience breathing difficulties and was admitted to Brompton Hospital, central London. Later she was transferred to the Portland Hospital for further tests.

They revealed that myeloid leukaemia had relapsed and her condition was deteriorating fast. On Tuesday afternoon she was conscious and chatting happily; by the evening she had developed bleeding on the brain, slipped into unconsciousness and died.

On the face of it, the death of Jaymee Bowen supports the contention of NHS doctors that extra treatment would have been pointless. In January 1988, after an earlier bone marrow transplant had failed to stem the cancer, they decided that a second such operation would serve no useful purpose and would merely put her through unjustified pain from intense radiation doses and chemotherapy.

There was no gloating by the NHS yesterday that its prediction had come true. "Today is not a day for us to have any sense of vindication. This is a day for grieving; it is a desperately sad day," said Stephen Thornton, whose title is chief executive of Cambridge and Huntingdon Health Commission but who will be remembered as the bureaucrat Jaymee threatened to whack.

Vindication aside, he added that he stood by the commission's stance. "If the question is, but we feel the decision not to fund the second operation was the right one? then the answer is yes. We feel that decision was right."

In the black and white world of tabloid newspaper journalism, that decision was lambasted as a callous choice of accountancy over human compassion. To save £75,000 the NHS was sacrificing the chance to prolong a young girl's life.

It made great copy, and the column inches and rushing press ran and ran. "Girl sentenced to die by the NHS," blared the Daily Mirror. "What value is put on a child's life?" pontificated the Daily Telegraph.

But it was never quite that simple. The NHS did agree to pay the full cost of Jaymee's

care in the private sector over the past nine months, supporting the therapeutic relationship she had built up with her Harley Street consultant, Dr Peter Gravett.

Jaymee's NHS doctors concluded that the probabilities of her benefiting from a second bone marrow transplant didn't stack up. "We never at any time said we would not pay for her care, but it was not the right thing to do," Mr Thornton said.

Logically, the NHS line was coherent. Given the constraints of health service funding, it was deemed better value for money to invest £75,000 on the well-being of many rather than on a high-risk, pain-inflicting attempt to save a dying girl.

But in this case the health service greatly underestimated one factor in its logical equation. It might not make sense to spend £75,000 on what was medically deemed a lost cause. But it does if it is your own life at stake — more so if it's that of your child. As Mr Justice Lew, the High Court judge who first deliberated on the Child B case, put it: "To anyone confronting the prospect of extinction in a few weeks, such a chance of longer survival must be unimaginably precious."

In Jaymee Bowen and her

father, David, the NHS had met a formidable duo. David, aged 32, a divorced computer engineer from Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire, was born in Georgetown, Guyana, moving to this country with his parents when he was five.

Jaymee, born on August 5, 1984, was his oldest child. "Jaymee has always had a special place in my heart because she was my first child and I think there's a different bond between you and your first-born," he told Sarah Barclay, a Panorama reporter who has written a book on the Child B story.

Father perceived daughter as the flagship of the family and was fiercely proud of her spirited independence. "You get your fingers burned with Jaymee if you upset her; she has a very analytical mind, very inquiring, very probing."

She lived up to her reputation in October last year when she commented for the first time on her battle. "I say never give up, unless you are just on the last little drop of life you have in you. Never give up." Asked what she would do if Mr Thornton were in the room with her, she turned to page 2, column 3.

John Palmer in Strasbourg and Michael White

Cabinet goes on beef attack

THE Cabinet stepped up its war of words and diplomatic obstruction with the European Union yesterday, just as EU officials pledged again to fight for an early lifting of the ban on British beef byproducts.

As the Prime Minister effectively elbowed aside Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, by setting up two new Cabinet Office committees to run his campaign to end the ban on all beef products, the Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, played to the Tory Eurosceptic gallery at home.

While welcoming the European Commission's renewed efforts to lift the ban on gelatin, tallow and bull semen as positive and supportive, Mr Rifkind admitted the Cabinet's tougher stance had been greeted with dismay and anger in other EU capitals. It will prove counterproductive, London is being told.

"The crucial point is that we didn't expect the Prime Minister's announcement to be welcomed by other countries... but we are not going to be pushed around, and that concentrates the mind wonderfully," he said.

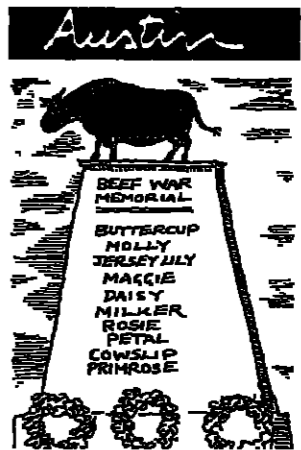
The byproducts ban is costing British farmers £25 million a year, but the blanket ban is costing £500 million.

To the anger of Tory right-wingers, a more cautious note was persistently struck in media interviews by the cabinet's most vocal pro-European, Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor.

Despite Monday's unexpected decision by EU vets not to lift the partial ban, — a decision which the commission will now put to next month's meeting of farm ministers — there are widespread doubts that Mr Major would really block forthcoming agreements — or the Florence summit towards the end of next month.

"These problems cannot be solved by strongarm tactics or blackmail," the Italian foreign minister, Lamberto Dini, said. Sweden, which has also supported Britain over the beef ban, also warned that the EU must ensure that any British ban does not affect the work of the commission.

However, EU ministers will probably vote by a sufficient majority to lift the partial ban on June 8 — or after a further delay of 15 days — the commission will invoke rarely used powers to lift it.



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Owen Oyston jailed for six years for rape of girl

David Ward

THE millionaire businessman Owen Oyston was jailed for six years yesterday after being convicted of raping and indecently assaulting a 16-year-old model.

The judge told him: "You were rich and powerful. She was young and vulnerable. I don't believe she led you on in any way."

A jury of eight women and four men found him guilty on the two counts after more than eight hours of deliberation at the end of a 30-day trial at Liverpool crown court. They acquitted him of

raping another model, aged 18 (Miss A).

Mr Oyston, aged 62 and a benefactor of the Labour Party, had denied all three charges. Dressed in a dark blue suit and wearing his Blackpool Football Club tie, he stood with his hands folded as sentence was passed.

He mouthed a message to his wife Vicki as he was led from the dock and his 25-year-old daughter, Heidi, one of his five children, fought back tears.

Mr Justice McCullough jailed Oyston for three years for indecent assault and six years for rape, the sentences to run concurrently. Passing sentence, he told Oyston: "I am prepared to assume that you

hoped your advantages of age, wealth and position would influence her to agree with what you wanted. But when it came to it, she did not."

"It is impossible to assess the extent to which Miss B has been traumatised by the events of that night."

The court had heard that during a late-night car journey in 1981, Oyston forced Miss B to have oral sex with him. When they arrived at Cloughton Hall, his manor house near Lancaster, he raped her.

The jury was told that after having had sex with another girl, he ordered Miss B to remove her clothes and get into bed. She had lain still and unresponsive, making it clear that she was not consenting.

Oyston made his first fortune by building up a chain of estate agents, which at its peak ran from the Midlands to the Scottish Border and was sold for an estimated £30 million.

He has had interests in several radio stations, including the highly profitable Piccadilly Radio, Manchester. Last month he invested a reported £1 million in the newly launched Sunday Business.

He is chairman of Blackpool FC, into which he has poured £3 million of his own money. In February he unveiled plans for the club to move



Owen Oyston... Labour Party benefactor

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Sketch

All quiet on the Freeman front



Simon Hoggart

There's something deeply perverse about the House of Commons. The day after the Government declared war on Europe we had to undergo one of the most narcotic sessions in the Chamber anyone could remember. It is usually like this. At the sitting immediately after we last declared war, on Argentina in April 1982, MPs debated the Local Government Finance (Number 2) Bill (Grant-Related Expenditure) in front, I suspect, of an equally empty House. Yesterday's subject was Developments in the Civil Service, never a topic to quicken the blood, and it was remarkable how few civil servants were around to hear it. As for MPs, the trains home were crammed to the corridors with fleeing legislators, ministerial cars brought limo-lock to Whitehall, and flying squads of northern Labour MPs were thumping lifts on the M1 slip road (drivers stop for Claire Sheehy in hot pants, then Dennis Skinner jumps out of the bushes and climbs in too). Speaking for the Government was Mr Roger Freeman, who is Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and so, through the strange disbursement of titles throughout the British constitution, responsible for civil servants. (If we had someone called Minister for the Civil Service, he would be in charge of the Duke of Lancaster's estate management). Mr Freeman is an accountant by trade, of course. He has that curiously soothing voice which accountants use to stop you getting excited. If he were telling you that your forgotten shares in the South Sea Trading Company were now unexpectedly worth £10 million, or alternatively that Robert Maxwell had made off with your life savings, his tone would not change. He is deeply dull. Yesterday

In the course of his speech he uttered what may have been the three most dreary words heard in the Chamber this year: "Seventhy, Madam Speaker..." The trouble is, he knows he is boring. Like many of the great ones, he tells you "One of our national newspapers describes our contributions to this debate as rather sleep-inducing," he said, in the faintly piteous manner of the office crasher, who hopes you will say, "no, no, dear me, Roger! Why, compared to Peter Tapsell, you're almost interesting!" A few courteous Tories muttered dissent from Mr Freeman's confession. Encouraged, he mentioned a select committee in the House of Lords, concerned with the civil service. "I look forward to appearing at the select committee in Another Place after the Whitsumtide recess." An image swam into my head: Mr Freeman, lying on a tropical beach in pin-striped trunks, waves from a turquoise sea murmuring sibilantly on the shore, a chilled pina coloda in his hand, reflecting that the one thing which would make his happiness complete would be the chance to talk about the civil service to a House of Lords select committee. The air of torpor suffused the Chamber. One MP, Mr Bernard Jenkin, rose to intervene. After a few moments Mr Freeman sat down to give way, but Mr Jenkin, presumably unable to stand it any longer, had left his seat and engaged the Speaker in conversation about something - about anything at all: hints on last removal, perhaps, or constitutional problems in the Hanseatic League. A spasm of interest seemed to overtake Mr Freeman, but quickly passed. "We should look clearly and coldly - and in as boring a way as possible - at these issues," he said. At this point, fearful that I might fall asleep and crash over the gallery rail onto the half-dozen MPs in attendance, I also departed. In the lobbies they were talking about the threat of the European tallow mountain, and the semen lake. It sounded like a revolting health spa in the French Alps for men deeply worried about their virility.

Clinton steals march on Republicans by pledging mini Star Wars system

Martin Walker in Washington

President Clinton promised yesterday to develop a slimmed-down version of Ronald Reagan's Star Wars missile shield within the next four years, and pledged to keep the United States military "prepared to fight and win on two fronts at once". He laid out his vision of a secure and all-powerful America, whose trade and values would dominate the future, while his homeland and its far-flung garrisons of troops overseas would be protected from ballistic missile attacks. "We will enter the 21st century with a military whose fighting edge is sharper than ever," Mr Clinton told the US Coast Guard Academy in Con-

necticut in one of the carefully prepared policy speeches of his re-election campaign. "With a peaceful, undivided Europe and a stable, prosperous Asia, with fewer nuclear weapons in the world's arsenals and tough new agreements to control chemical and biological weapons; with terrorists, organised criminals and drug traffickers on the run, not on the rampage; with more barriers to American products coming down; with more people than ever before living with the blessings of peace and democracy. Always vulnerable on defence and military issues since his avoidance of the Vietnam war, Mr Clinton is determined to pre-empt the attacks of his Republican challenger, the second world war veteran, Senator Robert

Dole. Mr Dole has already attacked Mr Clinton for "a weak and vacillating foreign policy that dismays our allies and encourages our enemies", and has sought to make Star Wars into an important electoral theme. But Mr Clinton argued: "The possibility of a long-range missile attack on American soil by a rogue state is more than a decade away. To prevent it, we are committed to developing by the year 2000 a defensive system that could be deployed by 2003, well before the threat becomes real. "We cannot withdraw into Fortress America - there is no wall high enough to keep out the threats to our security - or to isolate ourselves from the world economy or other trends in the global society. "Democracy and free markets are neither inevitable nor irreversible. They need

our support, the power of our example, the resolve of our leadership," he added. "Imagine the slaughter we would still be seeing in Bosnia if we had not brought our force to bear through Nato." The reality in Bosnia is, however, at odds with Mr Clinton's triumphalist vision. He and the German chancellor, Helmut Kohl, meeting today in Wisconsin, are to discuss what to do if the Nato-led international peacekeeping force in the former Yugoslav republic has not stabilised the area by the end of its mandate in about seven months. Germany has sent a much smaller armed contingent to Bosnia than the US, Britain or France but is desperate to send home the 330,000 refugees from former Yugoslavia it still shelters. During his US visit, Dr Kohl is due to meet the de-

fence secretary, William Perry, and military officers. An adviser to Dr Kohl said in Bonn yesterday that the chancellor would express his views on how the security partnership between Europe and America should be expanded in the aftermath of the cold war. The aide said it was in US interests to deepen the relationship with Europe and avoid a single-minded orientation toward the Pacific rim. In yesterday's speech, Mr Clinton pledged that America would continue to provide global leadership in the next century, as it had in this one. He rejected any return to isolationism and pledged that the US military would continue to dominate the seas, the air and space. This could be done without bankrupting the US budget, Mr Clinton insisted. His own

defence budget of \$250 billion (\$166 billion) was sufficient to keep the US and its allies secure. At about 3.7 per cent of GDP, this year's Pentagon budget is the lowest share of the US economy since 1940, the year before the country was brought into the second world war. It still amounts to more than the combined total of the world's next 10 biggest defence budgets. Mr Dole's attempt to use the Republican majority in Congress to mandate the building of an anti-missile defensive system, would waste \$80 billion, Mr Clinton insisted. "They want to force us to choose a costly missile defence system today that could be obsolete tomorrow. They want us to deploy it before we know the details and the dimensions of the threat we face," he said.

First night

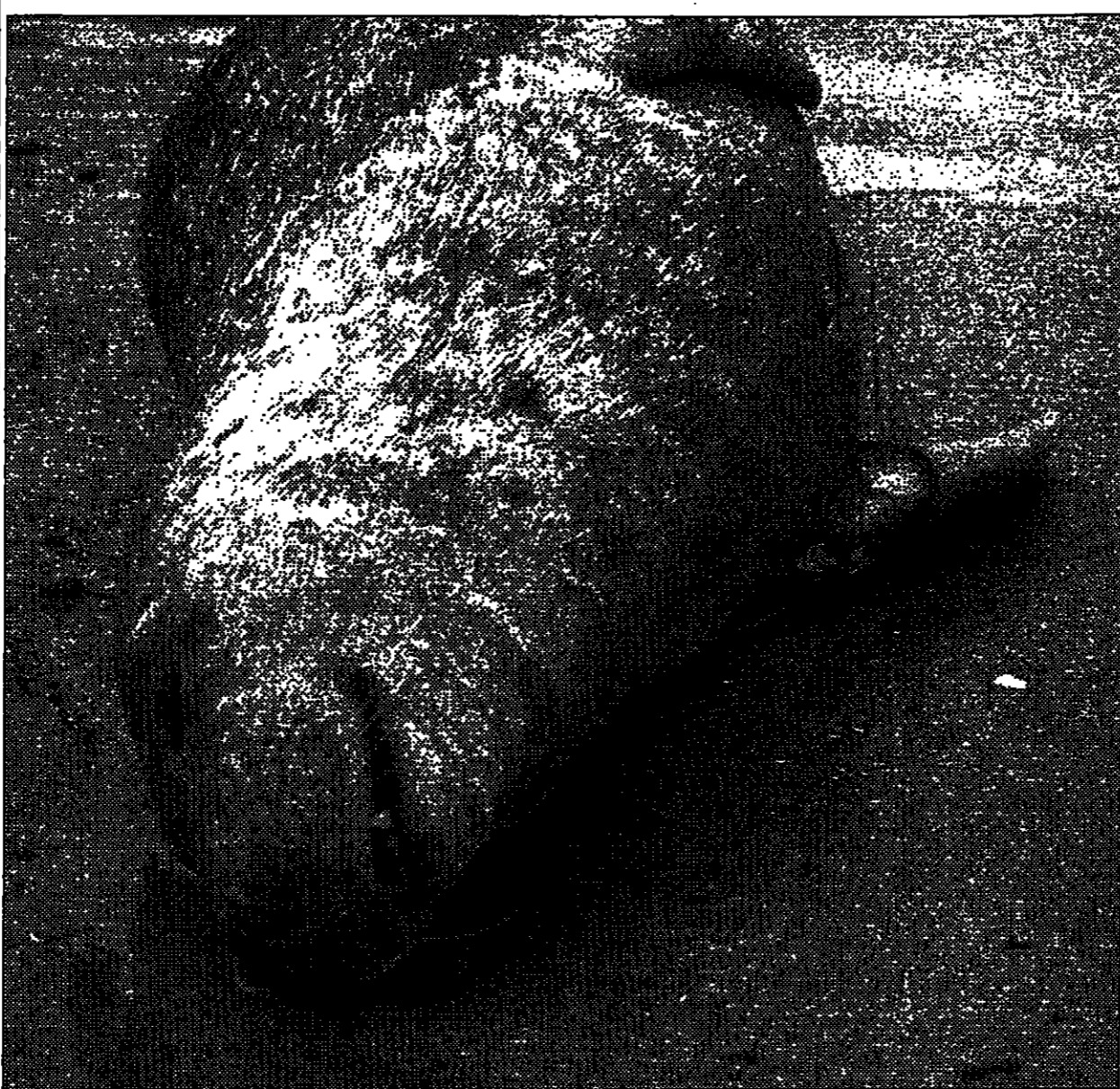
But eastward look, it's all a blur

Michael Billington

Claustrophobia Nottingham Playhouse

Where does theatre begin? With actor, author or director, there are very few rules, but historically most great theatre has stemmed from a collaborative interpretation of a written text. The Maly Theatre of St Petersburg's Claustrophobia, getting its British premiere at the cosmopolitan Nottingham Playhouse before moving on to Glasgow and London, derives, however, from actors' improvisations. Which may explain why it combines stunning ensemble vivacity with structural amorphousness. The Maly, under Lev Dodin's direction, are an amazing troupe. And, over the last decade, they have built up a loyal following in Britain through such productions as Stars in the Morning Sky, Brothers and Sisters, and Gaudemus. But in the past their physical inventiveness has been anchored in the work of existing texts or adapted novels. Here they have no such safety-net, and it shows. Claustrophobia started from the actors' responses to their native Russia on returning from foreign travels: what is records is the confusion of a young generation caught between the collapse of the Soviet system and the uncertainties of freedom. They seem to be searching for an identity in an ideological vacuum. But, while the broad thrust is clear, the details are often puzzling. The setting is a white-walled room in the St Petersburg Theatre Academy; the company's own classroom.

While young women practise at the barre, two male students float in through the window. After exploring their ambiguous sensuality and sniffing glue, they define themselves as "ubiquists": organisms that adapt to any new form of life. What follows is a kaleidoscopic picture, filled with dance, music and acrobatics, of the hazards of adapting to a society uncertain of its own future. One point that emerges clearly is that the new Russia contains disturbing echoes of the old. A crippled violin-playing beggar flings himself, excluded from a church which has its own mendicant mafia. A queue, which could be pre- or post-perestroika, dissolves into fractious nationalist squabbles. The new "ubiquists" even create an old-style collective farm in which people are punished for infringement of state rules. Russia, it is implied, is in a fluctuating turmoil in which old Communist thought-patterns lurk beneath the surface. Physically, the show is an astonishing Meyerholdian display: the actors kick and high-step to bursts of Rossini, Mozart, Piaf; a suspended door turns into an operating table; the room itself symbolically disintegrates. What I miss is the kind of narrative framework that in Gaudemus gave a structure to the ensemble virtuosity. Even judged as a spectacle, this two-year-old show has been overtaken by recent events, with the Communists edging closer towards the middle-ground. As a showcase for Dodin's multi-talented company, Claustrophobia is eminently worth seeing. As a guide to the new Russia, it is a sketchily impressionistic piece crying out for an authorial vision.



One of the dead seals washed up on the beach at Filey, above, where a group of men armed with clubs had earlier told local residents Marie Sweeting, top right, and Darren Taylor that they were planning to kill seals to protect salmon stocks. Mr Taylor photographed the men at Filey Brigg, bottom right, a favourite basking place for seals

Slaughter of seals shocks family seaside resort

Martin Walkwright

ONE of Britain's leading family resorts has been shaken by the clubbing to death of seven seals, two of them found in a pool of blood near the children's corner of the town beach. The slaughter has shocked the North Yorkshire port of Filey, which combines bucket-and-spade tourism with inshore fishing, especially for salmon and sea trout. Marine experts and the RSPCA yesterday denounced the killings as "brutal and disgusting" and graphic picture evidence of a stabbed and

blood-soaked seal has alarmed the local tourism industry. Police and RSPCA inspectors appealed yesterday for information about the deaths, which left the animals with smashed heads, broken spines and stab wounds. Witnesses have already come forward to claim that a small number of local fishermen armed with clubs and martial arts sticks went hunting for the seals, claiming they damaged their salmon business. Most fishermen in Filey and Scarborough, the area's main port, have expressed horror at the killings. Marie Sweeting, a housewife from Filey, has given the RSPCA details of a group of

men she met on Filey Brigg, a spit of rock projecting the fish-rich bay. "These men were not what I'd call fishermen, but people who make money out of fish," she said. Seals bask on the Brigg's ledges at this time of year and allow people to approach. Mrs Sweeting added: "I was out with my daughter and two of the men told us they were going out to kill seals. We'd been passing the time of day with them and when we asked how they were, one said: 'Very well, thanks - better than those soda out there are going to be.' They weren't going to spend £1,000 on a salmon licence to see the fish go to seals."

Details of the incident were passed to the RSPCA and North Yorkshire police by Darren Taylor, aged 20, of Filey, who was with Mrs Sweeting and took photographs. Mrs Sweeting said they did not see any actual attacks on seals, because they had to leave the Brigg when her 13-year-old disabled daughter became distressed. Two blood-soaked seals were washed up later close to children's corner, one with a deep gash between its flippers. Mr Taylor said: "It was a sickening sight. There was blood and gore all over the beach." Marine specialist Simon Foster, from Scarborough Sea



'Never give up unless you are on the last drop of life'

continued from page 1 replied: "I wouldn't sit there and say anything. I would go over and smack him one." The earliest signs of her illness were spotted in December 1989, when Jaymee was five. She developed a swelling on her left cheek that grew into a lump the size of a golf ball. Her doctor diagnosed mumps. It was almost a year before cancer was diagnosed. It is an acute irony that when she first fell ill her father had a booming property business. On a whim he bought a new Rolls-Royce for £90,000 in which he used to drive Jaymee to school.

But soon after cancer was diagnosed, his firm foundered and he was made bankrupt. When he needed cash to pay for his daughter's treatment, none was at hand. In January 1995, when David Bowen was told by doctors his daughter had eight weeks to live, he refused to accept it. "I will walk over anything and anyone," he told Sarah Barclay. "I'll continue like a machine - I won't eat, I won't sleep, I will achieve the task. That's the way I am." He spent his time scouring medical tomes and contacting specialists in America. After

a month of striving he was put in touch with Professor John Goldman of Hamman-Smith hospital. If Jaymee could survive chemotherapy, Prof Goldman put her chances of long-term survival at 10 per cent. "We are doctors, not robots," he said. "It's not appropriate to refuse treatment - you should always keep your options open." Having failed through the courts to force the NHS to fund a last-ditch attempt to save his child, Mr Bowen eventually received a gift for the £75,000 from an unnamed donor. The money paid for

treatment from Dr Peter Gravett, a private Harley Street haematologist who gave Jaymee a controversial second bone marrow and white cell transplant from her sister. The NHS dubbed the treatment "experimental". Dr Gravett called it "the most promising option around." Yesterday Dr Gravett said Jaymee had been given a year of relatively good health as a result of his care. "Conventional treatment would have allowed her a few more weeks. It is worth £5,000 a month to have an 11-year-old girl running around for a year? The expenditure was justified."

There is no way of finding a compromise between these polarised positions; no halfway ground. The logic of the NHS's position, its insistence that all that sensibly could have been done for Jaymee was done cannot be squared with David Bowen's desire to keep his child alive. This is the black hole where commonsense and the craving for existence collide. There is some comfort, perhaps, in Jaymee Bowen's death. Despite her seemingly insatiable yearning to cling on, it appears she had grown tired. "I can't face it any more

really," she said to Sarah Barclay, adding she was now prepared to die. If there was an afterlife, she wanted to come back as a butterfly. "There's nothing to be scared of, and hopefully it won't be painful." It wasn't Dr Gravett said she was in no discomfort at the end, and her family was at her bedside. As David Bowen emerged from Jaymee's room he said to the consultant: "Don't let anyone tell you that we failed." The funeral will be held in a few days' time. Cambridge and Huntingdon health commission are considering whether to send a representative.

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Handwritten Arabic text at the bottom of the page.

We've not won yet, Blair warns

Patrick Wintour, Chief Political Correspondent

THE Labour leader, Tony Blair, yesterday warned his party that it had not yet won victory in the battle of ideas, the necessary precondition for a electoral triumph next year.

Mr Blair has also made a dramatic appeal to intellectuals and policy makers outside the Labour Party to help to build the kind of alliance that helped Clement Attlee in 1945 and Margaret Thatcher in 1979.

Mr Blair's tough self-assessment of the slow intellectual development of Labour comes after three weeks in which the party's front bench has revealed internal schisms over key policy areas.

Writing in the monthly magazine Prospect, Mr Blair claims that the party has thrown out the dead wood and constructed the building blocks of new ideas, but concedes: "There is a pressing need for continued debate to deepen these ideas, refine them and toughen them up. People outside the party have a critical role."

"They can help us to understand the issues and forces shaping society so that we can shape the future. And they can contribute to nitty gritty policy work: it may not have the glamour of pure intellectual endeavour, but it is equally demanding."

Mr Blair also quotes the view of the influential centre-left politics professor, David Marquand, that "one of the safest rules of politics is that decisive political victories must follow ideological victories. Like armies sweeping through fortified positions, but mainly because people find their ideas bizarre."

Mr Blair continues: "Labour is not yet at that stage. The synthesis we achieved in 1945, or the Tories managed after 1979, does not come easily."

The Labour leader also maintains that the modernisation of Attlee's government was not matched by Harold Wilson's governments, but rather by Lady Thatcher.

He claims the challenge for a modern party is to recognise different realities, while providing a programme and message which can move both uncommitted voters and party activists.

Mr Blair also reveals that he believes it is now more difficult to win the battle for ideas, partly because there is no longer a cohesive intellectual elite and partly due to the way the modern media cramps political debate through lurid headlines.

One consequence, he claims, is that real debate can no longer take place within parties, let alone across the old left-right political divides.

Mr Blair does not denigrate the party's achievements, saying the building blocks of a new centre-left identity are now in place. These include the idea of stakeholding, the need to fashion a new social order to combat insecurity, and the need to find a post-imperial role for Britain inside Europe.

But he reveals that he is relaxed about right-wing claims that they are constructing the more exciting ideas. He claims this is because they have departed from the mainstream. "This sets them the headlines, but mainly because people find their ideas bizarre."



Jason Lee... a great career ahead of him, with Del Monte?

Footballer misses the joke after being put on transfer list

John Duncan Sports Correspondent

JASON LEE, the Nottingham Forest footballer put on the transfer list after his confidence was shattered by a series of television sketches mocking his hair and his goalkeeping ability, was keeping his head down yesterday — pineapple and all.

Lee is at the centre of one of the strangest soccer stories of the year, after his manager Frank Clark reportedly claimed that the BBC's programme Fantasy Football League, presented by Frank Skinner and David Baddiel, had affected the player so much that he was having to sell him.

The sketch that seems to have started it all was broadcast on January 12. In it Baddiel, dressed as Lee — with a pineapple on his head, mimicking the player's dreadlocked hair gathered with a headband — is summoned to see Clark (Skinner) in his office because Fifa are thinking of making the goals bigger.

He tries to throw an empty water bottle in the bin, but misses. He tries to put a lump of sugar in his coffee but misses. Viewers then see a series of dreadful howlers from the Lee archive.

"But I made the goal for Stuart Pearce last week, boss," says Lee. Footage shows Lee miscue horribly from six yards and the ball falls for leave him to score.

Since then the programme has regularly featured jokes at the player's expense.

According to Clark, opposition crowds and even children in playgrounds sing "He's got a pineapple on his head" (to the tune of "He's got the whole world in his hands") at Lee.

Figures of fun



Gary Sprake What Jason Lee has been to the 1995/6 season, Gary Sprake was to the late Sixties and early Seventies. His errors were legendary, and regular, including throwing the ball into his own net thinking the final whistle had gone. His reputation was bad enough to have been passed down the generations, but he maintained it was press persecution.



Graham Taylor Taylor suffered having his head transformed by the Sun into a turnip after defeat by the Swedes and was subsequently vegetally lampooned, with the theme accompanying his every match in charge of England. He felt the lash of Spitting Image with a sketch in which Hitler and Saddam Hussein are served in a bar but Taylor is kicked out as an unacceptable customer.



Tony Adams Adams was branded a donkey by Aston Villa fans for his alleged clumsiness and lack of ball skills and his appearances from then on brought a chorus of braying. The Daily Mirror published a picture of him as a donkey. Driving his car into a wall while drunk didn't help, but Arsenal fans turned it around, behaving with delight as he made crucial tackles.

of him. The rumour here in LA is that the Man From Del Monte is about to say yes to him. Anyway, we've taken the micky out of Andy Cole all season and it hasn't affected him, has it?"

"It's a factor in that I feel it has affected his confidence," said Clark. "It can't be very pleasant to have kids shouting these sort of things at you and that obviously is a direct result of what has come out on the programme."

"That view was echoed by sports psychologist John Syer. "The environment of a team game usually protects players from this sort of thing," he said. "But if the manager is not someone who is good at creating a team spirit then the player is much more vulnerable."

Skinner and Baddiel wrote to Lee in April inviting him on to the show. "We know you probably think we're a pair of bastards," they wrote, "but in all honesty it was never our intention to hurt your feelings... Anyway, the point is we really like your haircut. It's much better than Frank Clark's."

Leader comment, page 8

Bank points to bad debts trap

Sarah Fyle

MORTGAGE lenders battling to offer homebuyers the lowest interest rates and biggest cashbacks are fuelling fears of a return to the bad debt problems suffered after the 1980s housing market collapse.

Building societies' and banks' balance sheets may look healthy now. Bank of England officials said yesterday. But if the lenders keep up the drive to hold down mortgage rates — already at a 30-year-low — they could be storing up trouble for the future.

The Bank said that lenders were relying on the continuing stability of inflation, and therefore interest rates, to shore up their special deals. It warned that provision for bad debt was at historically low levels and banks were risking big losses similar to those of the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Interest rates then rose sharply to control inflation and unemployment shot up, forcing thousands into bad debt and repossession of their homes.

Lenders have assured the Bank that they have learned from past mistakes of taking too much risk and lending too much money. But the Old Lady is concerned that competition for market share could bounce back on the industry in two or three years' time.

One of the key reasons that the mortgage companies are now able to offer cashbacks and discounted rates was the relatively low return they are currently paying to savers, according to the Bank's annual report, published yesterday.

Many customers have left their deposits intact despite low interest rates in anticipation of windfall gains from conversions by building societies to banks and from acquisitions like the Lloyds Bank/Cheltenham & Gloucester deal.

But the Bank warned that this money is not locked up forever. Current rates to savers might offer little incentive to leave cash on deposit.

According to its report, the banking industry is generally healthy in terms of capital and also profitable by past standards. Margins on home mortgages have been quite

high recently by international standards. But it urged caution over accounting for the schemes used to win business, like cashbacks, and warned banks to resist the erosion of covenants in commercial lending deals.

The report said that loosening the reins on bank lending to individuals and to businesses would "store up problems for the future".

The British Bankers Association said last night that it had no fears about lenders making proper provision for the special deals in their accounts. It dismissed the prospect of the battle for mortgage market share causing overheating in the housing market and subsequent problems for borrowers.

Building societies said they would prefer not to have to cut mortgage rates back but had no option in the current climate.

The spokeswoman for the Building Societies Association, Sue Anderson, said: "It is no secret that some lenders would prefer not to be so competitive. Once it is like that, however, it's very difficult not to join in, because if you don't, then you lose market share. Borrowers are only interested in the up-front cost of the mortgage."

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 - 2. Fixed and discounted mortgages for first-time buyers:
 - Skipton Building Society: 4.75 per cent fixed until 31.03.98, fee £250.
 - Bristol & West: discounted rate of 0.71 per cent for six months, no fee.
 - 3. Discounted rate mortgages, all buyers:
 - Leeds & Holbeck: 0.99 per cent until Feb 1997
 - Yorkshire: 3.74 per cent for three years

EU cheated off by tax scam

John Hooper in Rome

ITALIAN tax inspectors served up a scandal yesterday to stir the nerves of every the most timid European — an alleged agriscam they claim has cost the European Union's taxpayers at least £31 million.

The fraud, aimed at evading rules for protecting EU producers, was said to have been carried out with the complicity of a semi-official Swiss farm board. Food importers in France and Germany are also accused of involvement.

Acting on the orders of a prosecutor in the northern Italian town of Varese, armed tax inspectors raided the offices of 33 companies which purchase cheese from Switzerland. The visit resulted in the entire board of directors of the sector's leading company being charged with fraud and embezzlement.

At the centre of the scandal is the Bern-based Schweizerische Kaseunion AG, (Swiss Cheese Union) a quasi-governmental organisation which is responsible for the import and marketing all the hard cheese produced by Swiss farmers.

To protect the EU's agricultural output from cheaper imports from non-Union countries, the European Commission sets minimum import prices. Buyers in the EU who import goods costing less than this minimum price have to pay much stiffer import duty. According to the Schweizerische Kaseunion, the duty increased twentyfold over the threshold.

Italian tax inspectors alleged that, for eight years, the Schweizerische Kaseunion systematically evaded these levies. It sold vast quantities of cheese to Italian companies at inflated prices, which saved the importers duty, then refunded them the extra cost of the cheese.

The investigators were speaking after a raid on the premises of the Varese-based firm, Praelpi Spa, Italy's biggest importer of Swiss cheese. Praelpi alone evaded £31 million of duty, the inspectors claimed.

They said a large part of the rebates went, not to the company, but into its directors' Swiss bank accounts. They have been charged with embezzling some £8.8 million.

A Schweizerische Kaseunion spokesman admitted last night that the facts as outlined by the Italians were substantially correct.

"But if we ask whether it was legal or not legal, the answer is not clear. It is a matter of interpreting what the law allows."

He said that while various grades of cheese had been exported at different prices, the real overall price was above the EU's minimum import price. Italian sources said the three cheeses involved were Gruyere, Emmentaler and the lesser-known Sbrinz.

Asked whether Schweizerische Kaseunion denied making payments to Italian company directors, the spokesman replied: "If you don't pay the money to the directors of a company, who else should you give it to?"

Some of the reimbursements were made by bank transfer, but others were by cheque, he said.

The first intimation of the scandal came earlier this month in a report from an EU anti-fraud body in Brussels. This indicated that the duty avoided came to 13 million ECUs (£10.4 million) in Italy, against 3.9 million ECUs in France and 1.2 million ECUs in Germany.



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In every important aspect Israel is Britain's cultural antipodes. If the British are formal, civil, phlegmatic, pacific and furtive, Israelis are unstuffy, rude, argumentative and open. Britain is ashamed of its flag; Israelis tie theirs to their car aerials.

Matthew Engel

G2 cover story

4 BRITAIN

Mother and daughter are reunited after 56 years

Sarah Boseley on 'miracle' for woman forced to abandon six-week-old baby

AN ELDERLY woman, who was incarcerated for 35 years in a mental asylum where she was taken with post-natal depression, is to be reunited with the daughter she was forced to abandon as a six-week-old baby.

Katie Claxton, aged 79, spoke to her daughter Maureen, now 56 and living in the United States, for the first time over the phone last week. Their emotional exchange marked the end of 50 years of tragedy and loss.

While Katie, whose depression lasted only a couple of months, was locked in a ward with highly disturbed women, separated from her child but never ceasing to think about her, Maureen endured a miserable and violent childhood.

"I have been pining for her all these years," said Maureen. "I am very angry. If I had known where she was, I would have been happier. I could have maybe got her out of the hospital."

Her mother, now living in a sheltered flat in Manchester, said the reunion was a miracle. "I never thought I would see her again."

Katie, who at one time was receiving regular electroconvulsive therapy, learned in Springfield hospital, in Crumpsall, Greater Manches-

ter, to accept her lot. "I had milk fever with having the baby," she said. "They shouldn't have kept me in the hospital. There was nothing wrong with me. Some of them were a bit demented. I kept away from them."

She was admitted in 1940. Her husband, George, was away fighting. Maureen had been placed in an orphanage. When George Claxton returned, he took his young daughter out and cared for her, but about a year later he died of cancer.

Maureen, then aged six, went to live with an aunt and uncle, who said her mother was dead. "They wouldn't let me have any contact with my mother's family," said Maureen. My aunt was very cruel to me. She used to beat me."

One day, when she was 12, a friend's mother said her grandmother lived nearby. Maureen visited her and told her she was her granddaughter. "She showed me the room where I was born. She told me my mother was in hospital, but never said which one."

Soon afterwards, Maureen ran away. "I couldn't take any more beatings." Her uncle took her to another relative. "Her husband attacked me, so I went to stay with my girlfriend's parents. I stayed until I was 18."



Katie Claxton, 79, with a photograph of her long lost daughter Maureen, to whom she spoke for the first time last week

She married — a GI bride — and moved to the US. She has six children and eight grandchildren, although her marriage broke up after 10 years.

'I have been pining for her all these years... I am very angry'

but has never stopped trying to find out about her mother. She traced her to Springfields, but was told by a doctor her mother did not recall having a child. She sent a letter, with a photograph, but Katie was not given it until she was discharged. Katie carried the picture with her everywhere, until she lost it

when she was mugged. The incarceration distressed Katie's mother and sisters, too, say Katie's niece, Joyce Hamill, aged 58, and her daughter Jane, aged 31.

"My gran and Katie's sisters used to visit Katie, but it was that traumatic and upsetting," said Jane, from Salford. "They tried to get her out, but nobody would help."

None of the family spoke about the woman in the asylum. "The first time ever I heard about Katie was on the wedding day of my auntie Frances, her sister," said Joyce. "The people next door sang, 'I'll take you home again, Kathleen,' and my grandma started crying. She said it was because auntie Katie was in hospital."

In 1975, Katie was released from Springfields, after she was befriended by a cleaner

who offered to give her a home and persuaded doctors to release her.

Katie's mother, Maureen's grandmother, had suffered a

'They shouldn't have kept me in hospital. There was nothing wrong'

mental breakdown and was in Prestwich hospital, Greater Manchester. Katie began to visit her regularly. Then she went to see Joyce Hamill, her sister's child.

"When Katie first came to me she said, 'You're Nora's daughter,' and it took off from there. Every Saturday and at holidays and Christmas she

comes to us. She's lovely," said Joyce.

"She talked about her daughter all the time. She wanted to see her. In the end, I told her I'd try to find her, but I never thought I would. It makes me want to cry. Just talking about it."

Ian Rhodes, a spokesman for the Manchester health commission, said: "These sorts of cases are not unusual."

The International Red Cross tracked Maureen to West Plains, Missouri. She did not know her mother had been released from hospital, and assumed the letter she received was to tell her Katie had died. Instead, it gave her a phone number, and she spoke to her mother for the first time on the evening of her 79th birthday and will soon fly back to see her.

News in brief

Doctors back right to assist suicides

MOST doctors are in favour of a change in the law to allow "physician-assisted" suicide, according to a survey published yesterday. The first UK research on the issue found that 54 per cent of the 700 GPs, hospital physicians, anaesthetists, psychiatrists and pharmacists who responded to the survey supported a change in the law to help patients to end their life in certain circumstances.

The survey, carried out by Sheila McLean, professor of law and ethics in medicine at Glasgow university, also found that 28 per cent of doctors would be willing to assist a patient in extreme mental or physical pain to commit suicide if it were legal. However, only 3 per cent of doctors admitted they had helped a patient to die.

Professor McLean said: "Anecdotal evidence suggests there are doctors who help patients to die. The aim of the research is to gather information which will allow us to draft a bill to legalise physician-assisted suicide."

Bowbelle sinks

THE dredger Bowbelle, which sank the Thames cruiser Marchionness seven years ago with the loss of 51 lives, has itself sunk — two thousand miles away off the coast of Madeira.

The 260-foot sand dredger, working under a new Portuguese name Bon Rei, broke in two on March 23, drowning one of its crew. But the accident went almost unnoticed until yesterday, when the connection between a routine report from the Lloyd's agent in Madeira was connected with the Marchionness disaster.

Members of the Marchionness Action Group, which fought to have a full inquest into the Thames cruiser's loss, expressed little surprise yesterday that the 32-year-old dredger should have sunk. "We always warned that the Bowbelle would come to an end like this," said Margaret Lockwood Croft, whose son Shaun was among those who died during a late-night birthday party cut short by collision under a Thames bridge. "Not only did its visibility problems mean that it had a series of collisions, but also we said there were structural problems." — David Fairhall

Fresh clues in hunt for rapist

DETECTIVES yesterday revealed new clues in their hunt for an armed sex attacker who preys on courting couples at a beauty spot. Police believe the man, who has struck four times in five years at Farley Mount, near Winchester, Hampshire, may be a member of the armed services. Detectives are checking with the services to see if the offences coincided with the end of tours of duty.

He last struck in April when a 16-year-old girl was tied up and abducted as she and her 18-year-old boyfriend sat in their car. The girl was driven seven miles and indecently assaulted before being dumped in a lonely country lane. Police revealed yesterday that in an earlier incident in November 1992, when a 20-year-old woman was abducted and raped, she was taken to a cottage or outbuilding within a 15-mile radius of the beauty spot.

Big Issue aims to cut suicides

THE Samaritans are training Big Issue sellers in listening skills to help depressed and suicidal homeless people in London. From this week a number of sellers of the magazine for the homeless will be taught suicide awareness in an attempt to reduce the rate of suicides among people living on the streets. An estimated 23 per cent of the deaths among those living rough are suicide.

Robyn Heaton, manager of the training unit at the Big Issue, said: "There's already quite a network of vendors who provide a listening ear to other homeless people and their customers, so this project seems a natural and logical extension of that."

Bullet girl to fly home

A FIVE-YEAR-OLD African orphan who was flown to Britain to have a bullet removed from her skull should be fit to return home next week. Doctors say they expect Tennesha Cole to fly back to Sierra Leone on Tuesday or Wednesday.

Tennesha had a bullet removed from behind her right eye nine days ago by surgeons at the Norwich and Norfolk hospital and staff say they have been delighted with her recovery.

Irish police admit accidentally destroying extradition warrant for wanted IRA suspect

David Sharrock
Ireland Correspondent

IRISH police yesterday asked the Home Office to submit future extradition warrants to them on coloured paper after admitting that they had mistakenly shredded documents last month relating to a man wanted for questioning in connection with the IRA's bombing campaign in England.

The Irish parliament had to be suspended three times yesterday as the row over the failed extradition to Britain of Dubliner Anthony Duncan raged. Several opposition MPs were expelled from the chamber, one of whom refused to withdraw a claim that the prime minister, John Bruton, had misled the house over the case.

Opposition members said Mr Bruton told the Dail last month there was no fault on

the part of Irish authorities in their handling of the case. But Mr Bruton insisted: "The statement I made was accurate and true, based on information I had at the time." He said a Garda investigation into the affair had only been completed two days ago.

The extradition hearing against Mr Duncan — who is wanted for questioning about IRA bomb attacks in England before the 1994 ceasefire — collapsed last month after a

Dublin court heard that documents were "fundamentally flawed". Mr Duncan was freed but immediately rearrested and charged with IRA membership. A new extradition attempt cannot be heard until this charge has been dealt with, which could take more than a year.

The extradition failure soured Anglo-Irish relations as Dublin government sources initially tried to pin the blame for the mistake on

the British authorities. But the Irish justice minister, Nora Owen, admitted in a written parliamentary reply that the original warrant had been "destroyed accidentally" while copies of it were being made by the Garda.

In the hope of further extradition documents avoiding a similar fate, Irish police now want them to be sent on coloured paper to distinguish them from photocopies. A Garda source said: "It's very

hard to make out the difference between an original and a good photocopy. If the original is on coloured paper it won't be mistaken for a copy."

The history of extradition between the Irish Republic and Britain is littered with mistakes, confusion and bitter rows. The lowest point was reached in December 1988 over the non-extradition of Father Patrick Ryan, when Margaret Thatcher accused Dublin of a "lack of resolve".

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Flag-waving strategy may boost Tory election hopes, but Eurosceptics doubt Prime Minister's nerve to push battle with Brussels

MPs see beef as Major's Falklands

For and against

To lift the beef by-products ban at the next agriculture ministers' council a qualified majority (82 out of 87) of votes will be needed. To maintain the ban a simple majority of member states voting, 8 out of 15, would be needed. But Britain already has seven countries on its side.

In favour

Britain: wants ban lifted as preliminary to complete removal of worldwide ban. Votes under qualified majority voting procedures: 10

Ireland: Desperate to get trade moving, but agriculture minister Ivan Yates thinks Britain must offer more detailed slaughter plans. Votes: 3

France: wants ban lifted: consumption down by more than a third and French farmers can't sell their beef. Votes: 10

Netherlands: beef market also badly affected. Votes: 10

Denmark: last country to ban BSE beef. Risky about the BSE crisis despite highest farm sanitary standards in the world. Votes: 3

Germany: hesitated before backing end of by-products ban on Monday. Votes: 5

Sweden and Finland: want more severe cutting but accept that by-products are safe. Votes: Sweden 4, Finland 2

Spain: in favour of lifting ban as BSE. Votes: 4

Opposed

Germany: deeply opposed to any lifting of sanctions until Britain has proved BSE is eradicated. Votes: 10

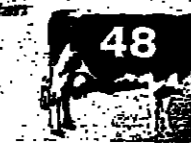
Austria: Naturally close to Germany but its opposition also dictated by internal strains in coalition government and strong opposition from health ministry. Votes: 4

Spain: upset with Britain over support for 30 year-ban on Spanish pork exports following severe fever epidemic. May be persuaded to change next time. Votes: 3

Portugal: anxious to get EU funding for its own BSE eradication plans. May be bought off in Luxembourg. Votes: 5

Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg: surprising detectors may have concluded it would do no harm with consumers at home to oppose a lifting of the ban. Votes: Holland and Belgium 5 each, Luxembourg 2.

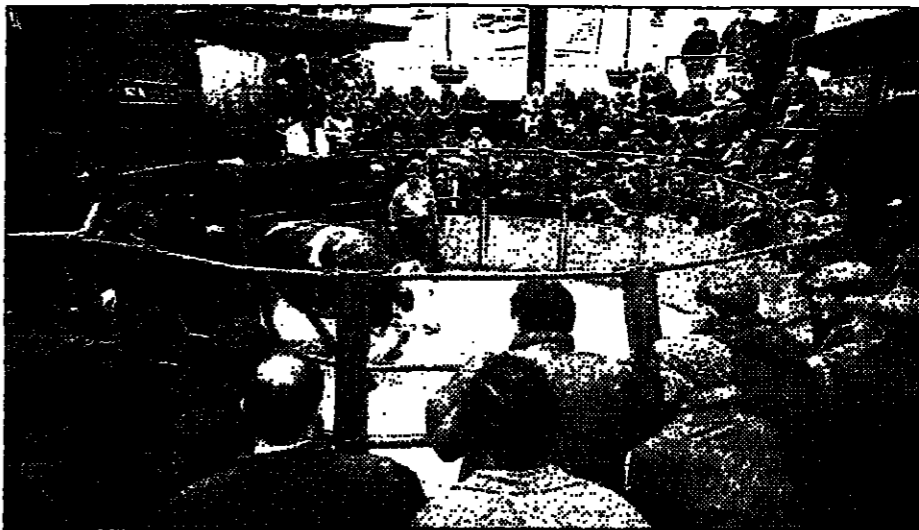
Total votes against lifting ban: 39



Michael White Political Editor

BACKBENCH Conservative euphoria over John Major's European beef battle was tempered yesterday by twinges of doubt. Moderates fear that the Prime Minister has disastrously over-estimated Britain's strength while the more sceptical Eurosceptics wonder if the Cabinet has the nerve to see the campaign through to victory. Tony Blair and Paddy Ashdown were aware that behind the sabre-rattling was the vague outline of a flag-waving strategy to save the Tories' election hopes. "It's like the Falklands, it's a huge gamble with a lot at stake," MPs said. Mr Major is said to have used the same analogy in reference to Margaret Thatcher's triumph over Argentina in 1982 which consolidated her Iron Lady reputation and election win in 1983. Wary of unpatriotic pitfalls, the Labour leader lay low, though he is planning to seek Italy's help in lifting the ban when he meets the new Italian prime minister, Romano Prodi, during a flying visit to Rome today. But Mr Ashdown sent an open letter accusing Mr Major of siding with the sceptics in his "reckless gamble" with both Britain's beef industry and its long-term relations with Europe. "If this gamble fails, then your authority as Prime Minister will have gone and the only honourable course left for you will be to resign and call a general election," he wrote. Some right-wing Tories see it in equally bloody terms. "I can't believe he'll get it out and there are plenty of people ready to put a noose round his neck if he falters," said one.

A gentler sceptic said: "For the first time I can see the outlines of a possible election victory." Other Tory MPs fear Mr Major has let the sceptic genie out of the bottle and will be unable to control it. "It's a serious misjudgment. It's us who have mis-handled this crisis and now we're threatening Europe even as we seek more compensation," said one. Both wings of the party fear that Mr Major will "declare victory" too soon, when the beef by-products ban is lifted, and may then be expected to make concessions on other issues. The real question is whether the beef crisis has produced a fundamental shift of backbench and ministerial sentiment into the sceptics' camp or whether it is an ill-considered tactic.



David Tomlinson leads the forlorn auction at Borderway market, Carlisle, yesterday, where cattle over 30-months-old were sold at rock bottom prices. PHOTOGRAPH TED DITCHBURN

Farmer

THE beef cattle are growing ominously fat on Henry Blake's 330 acre Cumbrian farm. By now his prime two-year-old steers should be heading from Eden Valley to an abattoir in north-east Scotland bound for the dinner tables of the Continent, writes Peter Hetherington. "But they can't go abroad," he laments, "and they're getting too big for the home market and too fat for export." As a result, more than 70 animals from what he thinks is a BSE-free herd are being

put out to grass in the forlorn hope they will find a market. But in his heart Mr Blake knows they will become part of the slaughter programme. He is losing on all fronts. "I have never seen a BSE case, and I would have been better off if all my cattle were over 30 months and qualifying for compensation. My worst fear is that if things are not back to normal by the end of the year we shall be struggling. I have been taking the animals to auction then bringing them back again." By the time the animals reach 30 months they will be past their sell-by date and ready for disposal.

Auctioneer

DAVID Tomlinson, the auctioneer, said the cattle sale fulfilled his worst expectations, writes Peter Hetherington. For over two hours, he conveyed 337 prime beef steers through the ring of one of Britain's largest markets at a rock bottom price of about £26 a piece, with the Government and the EU picking up most of the tab. "I recommend meat, this, from traditionally reared cattle," he said. The animals were the

largest batch of prohibited cows. 30-month-olds banned from entering the food chain, handled at the Borderway complex in Carlisle. The abattoir will receive £87.50 for each animal. "Who pays for it? You, and me, the taxpayer," Mr Tomlinson thundered. The sale and slaughter system appears at breaking point with older cows up to 12-years-old, the "cast" cattle that once went for meat processing, absent from yesterday's sale. Abattoirs can not cope with the backlog. "We've got 6,000 on our books and can't get rid of them," said Mr Tomlinson.

Abattoir

THE backlog of cattle waiting to be led into the Government's slaughter policy is now estimated at up to 150,000 animals, mainly dairy cows at the end of their productive life, writes Owen Bowcott. By next week the Intervention Board, which is co-ordinating the programme of destroying animals, plans to have 61 abattoirs involved in the process of killing, rendering and incinerating carcasses of cattle over 30 months to remove them from the human food chain.

The collapse in beef prices this spring — after the latest scare over BSE and its human equivalent CJD — forced farmers to hold back their herds from market, creating a backlog now estimated at between 100,000 and 150,000 animals. Before the announcement of a suspected new strain of CJD, slaughter houses were dispatching 15,000 cattle a week. The Intervention Board now hopes to increase the cull rate to 25,000 a week. If successful, it will therefore take three to four months to clear the backlog and revert to previous levels of activity.

BSE crisis puts 36,000 out of jobs with more set to go

Paul Brown Environment Correspondent

JOB losses due to the BSE crisis are estimated at 36,000 so far with more expected in the next few days as hard-pressed employers reacted to the news there was no hope of early reprieve to any kind of beef exports. Although farmers have complained most and received compensation and support from the Government, no jobs so far appear to have been lost. In contrast exporters, meat processing plants, hauliers, pie, burger and sausage makers have all lost jobs. Government statistics show that up to May 3, 4,500 people reporting to JobCentres blamed the BSE crisis for losing their last job. The Transport and General Workers' Union says its original estimate was 10,000 jobs lost in the abattoir sector but when the associated meat processing and food manufacturing were added, it grew to 36,000 jobs. Peter Currie, who works at

Midland Meat Packers, Northampton, is one of the union officials going to Brussels on June 5 to plead with the European Commission for £1 billion in emergency funds to help workers losing their jobs. "Our estimates based on reports from employers round the country is that 36,000 have lost their jobs and the numbers are going up daily." In 1995 the beef business employed 200,000 people directly, and 1.5 million in associated jobs in an industry worth £4 billion. The only official government estimates of jobs likely to be lost concern the abattoir and food processing businesses. Accountancy firms Coopers and Lybrand expect 6,000 to 8,000 jobs to go over the next year and 15,000 to 20,000 in the food processing business. Butchers have also been hit by the beef crisis with around 30 closing a week — 18 to 20 citing BSE as the final straw which spelled their demise. Hauliers expect to shed 30 per cent of the 6,000 jobs in the sector.

Press

THERE was little comfort or sympathy for the Government's stance reflected in yesterday's European Press. The Frankfurter Allgemeine dismissed Mr Major's Commons speech as of only "rhetorical significance". Le Monde said: "It was London, not Paris or Bonn, which initiated the crisis. In legitimising the hypothesis that BSE was transmissible to man, John Major's government had clearly not considered the degree of responsibility it was taking on." The Italian centre left daily La Repubblica argued: "The most relevant aspect of Major's speech is not what he said but where he said it — Westminster and not Brussels. The speech has to be read in the light of domestic rather than community politics." "It says a lot about the weakness of the British conservatives and that of the Prime Minister himself, nowadays a hostage to the most Eurosceptical circles in his own party."

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Guardian Thursday March

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Joker in the Stalinist pack

Who is the man who claims to hold influence over the high-flying Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov? David Hearst in Moscow spoke to Viktor Anpilov

VIKTOR ANPILOV admires Stalin and the dictatorship of the proletariat. And he believes in the spiritually cleansing effect of cutting wood in a Siberian labour camp — where he has already mentally reserved places for some opponents.

At the last election his party, Working Russia, polled more than 3 million votes and came within one percentage point of official recognition in parliament.

That was more votes than the former prime minister and guru of the shock therapists, Yegor Gaidar.

A journalist, Mr Anpilov, aged 50, specialises in lancing his pompous opponents with humour, and addressing rallies with political wit.

While Gennady Zyuganov, leader of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation and a mathematician, starts each election rally with statistics describing the crisis of Russia's people and its economy, his Stalinist electoral ally raises spirits with his rhyming slogans.

Mr Anpilov describes himself and his party as the single most important influence on Mr Zyuganov. Four weeks before the presidential election, Mr Anpilov, a copy-book Marxist Leninist, is quite clear about the limits of his support for Mr Zyuganov.

At an open campaign meeting, he urged Mr Zyuganov to be bolder and to promise to nationalise Russia's banks. "We're not about to shoot anybody. Let the current bankers work for the Central Bank. But whoever doesn't like it — there's enough room at the latrine for everyone," he said.

In response, Mr Zyuganov called on his supporters to be "more precise in their statements and not let slip any frightening words". He reminded them that his platform safeguards private property rights.



Political satire... The witty Viktor Anpilov, left, makes his point

Should Mr Zyuganov be elected president, Mr Anpilov says he would campaign to destroy the office.

"The institution of the presidency inevitably brings Russia back to a monarchy, to its medieval rudiments. We don't want to live in medieval times, therefore we are going

'We will struggle openly to liquidate the presidency. We have told Zyuganov'

to struggle openly for the liquidation of the presidency. We have told this directly to Zyuganov."

Mr Anpilov claims he is not interested in a ministerial post in a Zyuganov government.

He describes his main difference with Mr Zyuganov thus: "It is mainly about the problem of power. We have come to understand the dictatorship of the proletariat as a

higher form of democracy, as a triumph of the absolute majority over the interests of the minority.

"Comrade Zyuganov has been drawn to less concrete notions like 'people's power'. But we know what the point of departure of a dictatorship of the proletariat is. It's a

state where even the smallest collective, of workers or scientists, elects its own soviet, capable of controlling the expenses and income of the collective and even the wages of its administrators."

How will he achieve his ends? Well, he says, he will reopen the labour camps. As for its first occupants: "I believe the first trial must be Mikhail Gorbachev's. I am

even in favour of the state paying the best lawyers, but the proceedings must be shown live on television. If the court proves Gorbachev is guilty, and you know I am against the death penalty, I believe he would cleanse himself of his shame by honest work, and cutting wood is honest."

Mr Anpilov has described the former president as a traitor — to his face.

Next on the list would be the tank commanders who opened fire on the White House, their own parliament, in October 1993, then the people who ordered Mr Anpilov's arrest in May 1993.

But, returning to Comrade Zyuganov, are there not fundamental ideological disagreements between the two men? Such as Mr Anpilov's support for the dictatorship of the proletariat and Mr Zyuganov's professed support for a parliamentary democracy?

Mr Anpilov replies: "Zyuganov is cautious. He is playing by the bourgeois rules and I say let him play, because the reality is quite different. Zyuganov has to take this into account, but our aims are much more profound. It is to establish soviet power, to restore people's property, to re-establish justice."

"Our influence on him [Mr Zyuganov] becomes clear when you work with the masses. Most of them don't want civil war, and many see us as the safety catch on his gun. They see there is an alternative to him in our party, and to some extent this alternative has one concrete personality."

Comrade Anpilov is referring to himself.

Clinton wants Bosnian poll before he faces voters US envoy intent on toppling Karadzic

Ian Traynor in Bonn

THE United States last night stepped up the pressure to topple Radovan Karadzic, the hardline Bosnian Serb leader and indicted war criminal, in an attempt to keep its Balkan peace process on schedule and prevent a potential debate with President Bill Clinton's re-election chances.

John Kornblum, the US envoy to former Yugoslavia, followed up several days of telephone negotiations by going to Belgrade to seek the help of President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia in effecting Mr Karadzic's removal.

The US state department said Mr Kornblum's aim was "to make sure that all of them understand, from our point of view, the importance of civil implementation of the [US-brokered] Dayton peace accords."

Mr Kornblum's mission followed the failure last weekend of Carl Bildt, the European official in charge of overseeing civilian aspects of the Dayton accords, to secure Mr Karadzic's removal.

Central to the Dayton deal is the provision for free elec-

tions in Bosnia in September, although all the evidence suggests that the battered country is far from ready to stage a free and fair ballot.

German sources active in Bosnia said the Clinton administration's paramount aim was to make sure the elections took place on time to prevent any fiasco that could impinge on the US presidential poll in November.

The Americans want the elections held on September 14, although European officials working in Bosnia are less than sanguine at that prospect. The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe which is responsible for organising the poll has still not committed itself to a date.

"The last thing Clinton wants is a poll postponement," said a German source. "The US is putting huge pressure on the Europeans and they will probably have to say okay or start another row with the Americans. But the problems are immense. There is no funding, the media freedom is miserable."

The most likely outcome of an autumn poll in Bosnia will be to replicate the result of the first post-communist elections held in 1990 which

helped set the country on course for war: a triumph for three nationalist parties representing the Serbs, Muslims, and Croats.

Mr Karadzic is the biggest — but not the only obstacle — to a fair election as the Dayton deal bars him from holding elected office. He is fiercely resisting the international pressure to go and humiliated Mr Bildt at the weekend who boasted he had won assurances that the hardline nationalist was throwing in the towel.

By contrast, Mr Karadzic engineered the sacking of a rival moderate as the prime minister of his Bosnian Serb Republic, replaced him with a hardline croon, and had another nationalist ally named to liaise with the international powers.

The US appears to be moving in to flex muscles and bang heads where the Europeans failed.

Mr Kornblum's ace card in attempting to get Mr Milosevic to help is diplomatic recognition. Unlike the European Union countries which have afforded Mr Milosevic's rump Yugoslavia recognition in the past couple of months, the Americans are holding back.

Foul play suspected in French reporter's death

Alex Duval Smith in Paris

MYSTERY surrounds the death of one of France's leading investigative journalists, who was found hanging in his holiday home in Menorca.

Spanish police said they believed Xavier Gautier, aged 35, whose body was discovered on Sunday, had killed himself.

But other police sources in Spain indicated that the journalist, who had investigated the arms trade in former Yugoslavia for the French daily newspaper Le Figaro, may have been murdered.

The police chief for Ciudadela, Menorca, said the words *traitor* and *diavolo* (Italian for "devil") had been scrawled on the outside of the house.

But Fernando Rodriguez said: "We are inclined to believe it was suicide. The house was in order and there were no signs of a struggle. No suicide note was found."

Gautier's family yesterday called for a murder inquiry. Charles Lambroschini, the foreign editor of Le Figaro, whose Gautier had worked for nearly six years, said: "The family refuses to believe it was suicide. I have trouble believing he killed himself. At the same time it seems surprising that a Yugoslav faction might go to so much trouble as to kill him in Spain."

Mr Lambroschini said Gautier, who had begun a year's sabbatical in March, had previously investigated the work of arms traders who had breached the United Nations embargo on arming Croat and Bosnian forces.

While Mr Lambroschini said Gautier's reporting was exemplary in its bravery and accuracy, he said many other Western journalists had done similar work in the Balkans.

Refusing to comment on Gautier's state of mind, he said the reporter, who was unmarried, had been very upset at the death of his brother six months ago.

A Paris-based "freeman" — a reporter who travels to trouble spots across the world — Gautier had covered Kurdish resistance to Saddam Hussein in 1991 before specialising in the Balkans.

Mr Lambroschini said the reporter was renowned to be writing a book about the arms trade. In fact, having failed to secure a publishing contract, he was researching a biography of the rock star Bruce Springsteen.

Millions cross ex-Soviet borders

Owen Bennett Jones in Geneva

MORE than nine million former Soviet citizens, one in 30 of the population, have been on the move since the collapse of the communist system, according to a United Nations study.

Many of them have fled fighting. Ethnic disputes in Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan have led to 1.5 million people leaving their homes.

Similar population movements have been caused by fighting in Moldova, Tajikistan and Chechnia. The Russian Federation has absorbed the biggest inflow of people as ethnic Russians seek the safety of their motherland.

People have also been forced to move for fear of nationalist discrimination and because of environmental crises.

Humanitarian agencies believe such movements will be destabilising. While some

new countries, especially those in Central Asia, are suffering from a "brain drain" others, like the Russian Federation, are having to cope with millions of new arrivals.

Sergio Vieira de Mello, the UN's assistant high commissioner for refugees, says: "With so many on the move there is a risk of economic development being undermined and regional security being threatened."

The UNHCR believes an improvement in human rights

could contribute to a reduction in the flow of refugees. In the Soviet era, Russians moved to other republics where they were put in positions of authority. Many are now back home, and those who have chosen to stay put face problems.

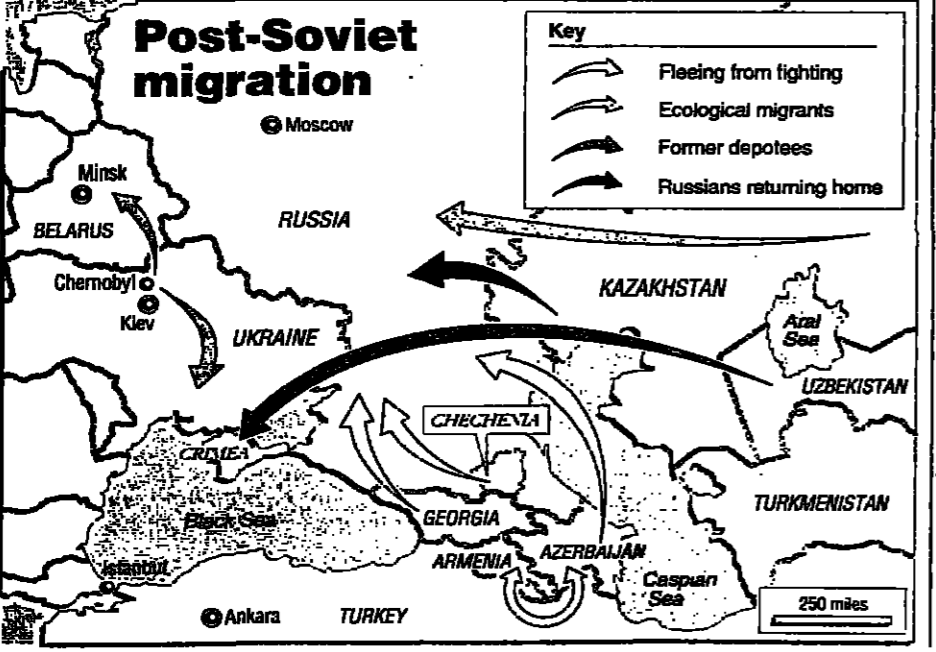
Russians in the accepted language of the Soviet Union and few ethnic Russians bothered to learn the local language. But the new governments have all declared official their own languages. Some are demanding knowledge of that language as a job requirement.

Some migrants are escaping from the Soviet Union's nuclear programmes. Nuclear contamination in Chernobyl and the Kazakh test site of Semipalatinsk has produced at least 700,000 ecological migrants.

The former Soviet states are also trying to unravel Stalin's policy of shifting populations. His regime moved 3 million people from their homes to other Soviet regions.

Entire national groups such as the Volga Germans, the Chechens and the Crimean Tatars were moved in cattle trucks to Siberia or Central Asia. Their descendants have been trying to get back home.

When the Soviet system collapsed, politicians feared a wave of immigration from East to West. In fact most of the population movements have been contained within the borders of the former Soviet Union.



If there is a problem with cultural theory it is not so much moronism as over-zealousness. In arguing that everything — from Vera Duckworth's wallpaper to Cantona's smile — means something, they have overburdened culture with significances it cannot support.
Charlotte Raven

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April 20 1996

Soldiers are using threats to stop a boycott of today's poll, writes **Suzanne Goldenberg** in Sore

Kashmiris coerced to vote

INDIAN soldiers have been summoning local leaders to demand that they turn out for parliamentary elections today or face the army's wrath tomorrow.

"They told us: 'If you don't have the blue mark on your finger that you have voted, then the next day we will cut it off,'" the leader of a residents' association in the apple market town of Sopore said.

Other town leaders, huddled in woolen cloaks against the biting spring cold, say they have had similar threats.

Today's elections, for the parliamentary seats of Baramulla and Anantnag, will be the first polls in the valley since the separatist uprising against Indian rule began in 1989. A second round in the capital Srinagar and another seat will follow on May 30.

For New Delhi, the elections are a matter of enormous prestige: evidence of its success in containing the gunmen and in persuading Kashmiris to return to the Indian fold. Today's vote is seen as a prelude to state assembly elections later this summer, and the Indian authorities want to make sure it takes place with a minimum of violence.

New Delhi has intensified its operations against separatist guerrillas, inflicting heavy casualties. Tens of thousands of paramilitary forces have poured into the valley, along with hundreds of civil servants, press-ganged into duty as presiding officers.

An 80-member medical team from New Delhi has been under heavy guard in a Srinagar hotel. Candidates make their rounds in bullet-proof cars, escorted by three armoured vehicles and a truckload of security forces.

But attendance is dismal at rallies. Among Kashmiris, who see the poll as a New Delhi tactic to ignore demands for talks on the valley's future, resentment runs deep.

The traditional Kashmiri party, the National Conference, has boycotted the polls, as have separatist organisations.



Protest vote... Kashmiri women shout anti-Indian slogans at a pre-election demonstration in Srinagar yesterday

PHOTOGRAPH: KAMAL KISHORE

"Elections are not held and cannot be held in a region where the government exists in bunkers and the guns roar," said Abdul Ghani, a leader of the pro-Pakistan Muslim Conference.

The separatist boycott leaves the field clear for political unknowns and candidates belonging to government-backed armed groups. "The candidates are not real militants," claimed one So-

pore man, shaking his fist in anger. "They are thieves, murderers and exploiters." Civil servants have been on strike for days, shops have been shuttered since Monday, and newspapers have ceased publication.

In Sopore, local leaders say officers from the local Ninth Gurkha Rifles have harangued them daily for the past week. "They have told us to make

sure there was a queue outside the polling stations. They said: 'It doesn't matter if you vote or not, we will do the rest,'" one local leader said.

But there is also fear of the separatists. Even those few Kashmiris who would like to vote will do so at their peril. "We cannot cross anybody to give our vote. At our front, there are guns; at our backs, there are guns," one government employee said.

"Nobody will give their vote voluntarily, but if they force us, what can we do?" But Javid Shah, the Srinagar candidate for the Awami League and former deputy of the chief pro-government group, denies intimidating voters. "We don't have our guns anymore," he said from his villa in Shivpora. "How can we force people to vote? The people will vote because they love us."

In the second powerful blast in India in two days, a bomb on a bus killed at least 14 people and wounded 20 in the north-west state of Rajasthan yesterday, the chief minister's office said. Police said no-one had claimed responsibility.

On Tuesday, nearly 30 people were killed in a New Delhi shopping district by a bomb variously claimed by Islamists and Sikh militants.

Junk fiend and deathbed wag has last laugh

Christopher Reed in Los Angeles

THE late playwright and author William Saroyan had a great deathbed line: "Everybody has got to die," he wrote, "but I always believed an exception would be made in my case. Now what?"

What indeed. Fifteen years after his death, the Armenian-American eccentric and controversialist is still stirring up the literary and academic world with a dispute about his legacy. Saroyan, who died aged 72, spent his last months rewriting his will and making arrangements for his "collection".

An unknown number of unpublished short stories, plays, novels, essays and letters made up a literary treasure trove from the author of *The Time of Your Life*, an acclaimed play he wrote in six days. He rejected the Pulitzer prize for it, saying the work was "too great" than anything else he had written.

But Saroyan was also a compulsive hoarder. The Saroyan Foundation he created includes 1,200 boxes filled mainly with junk. For years the venerated Bancroft library at the University of California at Berkeley kept the collection on loan, but only the literary works, which could be worth millions of pounds.

The clippings from Saroyan's wains monstache, old Metro tickets from his years in Paris, and the small rocks he picked up during bicycle rides all remained in the Armenian-American farming town of Fresno, California, where he was born.

There, too, in the attic of the Fresno Metropolitan Museum, were the boxes of pencil drawings Saroyan made of himself, his shoes, faces, gardening twine, and the old black Royal typewriter, on which he is estimated to have pounded out 10 to 15 million words.

There were also the labels. Every time Saroyan ate a tin of beans he would steam off the label, and stamp the date on it, sometimes noting what he thought of the beans and the weather. Now, to Berkeley's cha-

grin, their rivals at Stanford University have acquired the Foundation — old bottle-tops and all.

Anthony Bliss, manuscript curator at the Bancroft library, fumed: "Nobody at the Foundation consulted us. You read the self-congratulatory announcement from Stanford, and it's hard not to gag."

Michael Keller, head librarian at Stanford, was sympathetic. "Our colleagues at Bancroft have been doing wonderful things for decades," he sighed. "But... Saroyan will have a very strong presence here."

Two men with a lorry recently carted off the boxes from Fresno. It took them all day, but the museum was not sorry to part with the effects of Fresno's most famous son. The dominant agrifinancial elements of the now-booming city never embraced the eccentric Armenian.

Saroyan, the author of *The Human Comedy*, might be sardoniously amused by the row. Yet there is sadness too. He asked that no buildings be named after him; that the two houses where he spent his last days in Fresno and his home in Paris, be kept for visiting writers; and that his ashes be scattered in his ancestral village in Armenia.

The Fresno theatre is now called the Saroyan. The houses have been sold, and his wains monstache, old Metro tickets from his years in Paris, and the small rocks he picked up during bicycle rides all remained in the Armenian-American farming town of Fresno, California, where he was born.

There, too, in the attic of the Fresno Metropolitan Museum, were the boxes of pencil drawings Saroyan made of himself, his shoes, faces, gardening twine, and the old black Royal typewriter, on which he is estimated to have pounded out 10 to 15 million words.

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grin, their rivals at Stanford University have acquired the Foundation — old bottle-tops and all.

Mixed legacy: Late American playwright William Saroyan

Britain urges Burma to stop crackdown on opposition

BRITAIN yesterday condemned the arrests in Burma of 50 supporters of Aung San Suu Kyi, the opposition democracy leader, and urged the ruling State Law and Order Council to release them immediately.

A Foreign Office statement said Britain was "gravely concerned about the deteriorating political situation and rising tensions throughout the country".

Most of those detained by Burma's military rulers were elected members of the National League for Democracy (NLD), which plans to hold its first congress this weekend since a sweeping election victory in 1990.

A source close to Nobel peace prize-winner Ms Suu Kyi said the number of those arrested could be higher as news of the detentions across the country were slowly trickling in.

The army has run Burma with an iron grip since the 1980s, crushing an uprising in 1988 and terrorising or killing democracy activists. But it has been more circumspect

since releasing Ms Suu Kyi from house arrest last July.

The state-run media did not report the crackdown and government officials declined to comment. "We're not supposed to say anything on such a story. Why don't you approach the NLD people?"

Major Hia Tun, the senior information ministry official, said:

"Ms Suu Kyi and other NLD members spent yesterday preparing for the three-day congress of top party members that starts at her house in the capital Rangoon on Sunday."

An NLD source said the crackdown, the worst since Ms Suu Kyi's release, was expected. At least 44 of those taken were arrested while travelling or preparing to travel to Rangoon for the meeting, the source said.

The rest, including Ms Suu Kyi's secretary, Win Htein, were arrested late on Tuesday and yesterday in Rangoon.

Diplomats in Rangoon said the stage was set for a fresh confrontation between Ms Suu Kyi and the government. — Reuter.

News in brief

Forty Russian troops killed

Forty Russian soldiers were reported killed in a rebel raid in Chechnya yesterday, almost twice the number first said to have died in the attack. Interfax news agency said.

Interfax said earlier that 22 Russian soldiers had been killed and 48 wounded when separatist rebels broke through their lines near the village of Bamut in southwest Chechnya. Reuter.

Language barrier

The Irish are the least linguistically gifted national group in the European Union, according to a directory which analysed 1,700 EU officials. Luxembourgers fared best, with 84 per cent able to be understood in two or more languages apart from their own, followed by the Dutch and Belgians. — Reuter.

Court video-linked

A Tasmanian man accused of one count of murder in the Port Arthur shooting massacre of 35 people appeared in a courtroom via a video link

from prison yesterday because of security fears. Martin Bryant, aged 29, appeared in Hobart magistrates' court in connection with the murder of Kate Scott. — Reuter.

Japan spy agency

Japan's parliament yesterday approved the establishment of the country's largest intelligence agency, designed to gather and study military developments in East Asia and elsewhere. — Reuter.

Marshall aid plea

South Africa needs the same sort of Marshall plan assistance that helped rebuild western Germany after the second world war, President Nelson Mandela said in Bonn yesterday. — AP.

Defence legend

A former soccer star, Gianni Rivera, aged 62, has found a new job in defence — as a deputy minister in Italy's government. — Reuter.

Safety spaces

Women-only parking places will become standard at all rest stops along the national Autobahn, the German government decided. — AP.

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MEBACE

When rights collide

Jaymee's to fight, the NHS's to resist

FULSOME and eloquent tributes were rightly paid yesterday to the courage and spirit of Jaymee Bowen, the schoolgirl refused further NHS treatment for leukaemia, who lived for another year partly because of experimental palliative treatment bought privately thanks to an anonymous donor. She had an indomitable spirit, which all those who watched her on BBC Panorama quickly observed. In her words: "I would rather go through life struggling to live than do nothing and die. I say never give up." She was true to her word. Given only eight weeks to live, she survived for more than a year. But tributes, rather than brickbats, also need to be paid to the Cambridge and Huntingdon Health Commission, the authority which took the decision to stop further treatment.

Asked what she thought about the authority, Jaymee said she would like to meet the chief executive, Stephen Thornton, and "whack him one". Perfectly understandable. There should be no criticism of Jaymee, or her father, fighting for every bit of available treatment no matter how remote the chance of success. But health authorities have to be more impartial. The £75,000 which a second bone-marrow operation for Jaymee would have cost would also have been £75,000 less for other patients. The decision which they took was based on medical advice, which found the chances of Jaymee recovering from a second bone-transplant were virtually nil — a clinical decision which was upheld by two of the nation's top hospitals, the Royal Marsden and the Hammersmith, to which her father turned. It was only a private doctor, with no background in children's cancer, who thought it might work and then he changed his mind.

Her extra year needs to be celebrated, but the Cambridge authority needs protecting from castigation too. Yesterday

one of its critics, Professor John Goldman, suggested Jaymee should have been treated differently because of her lust for life. Implicitly this already happens in the NHS, but to turn it into a concrete principle would be to make the already tough and troublesome task of rationing NHS resources into a nightmare. It is bad enough trying to measure clinical need, likely effectiveness, and cost in the task of Solomon which health authorities are required to undergo, but Prof Goldman would only make the distribution of resources an even more Jesuitical operation. Imagine trying to measure people's spirit as well as their physical condition.

Rationing is as old as the NHS. It has been carried out implicitly (queues, waiting lists, waiting times) and explicitly, though always until recently in a covert manner: elderly people denied access to intensive care, alcoholics denied liver transplants. Now, under the restructured NHS, these decisions have become much more overt. This should be welcomed, not least because it could generate more resources for the underfunded service. What is wrong is the lack of a national framework. Ministers have pushed rationing down to local health authorities — so that they take the blame for unpopular decisions — but then intervene when local services begin to diverge to insist there must be national minimum standards. There must, but the only people able to set them are the very same ministers who are refusing to do so. It is no use the Health Secretary interfering in an ad hoc manner. Recently, for example, he insisted health authorities should not ban the use of a new controversial drug for multiple sclerosis which costs £10,000 per patient. But one-off interventions don't work. What is needed is a coherent and comprehensive framework. Ministers must come out of their bunkers.

Hogg's ham tactics over beef

Britain has been playing politics over BSE more than anyone

THEODORE ROOSEVELT famously advised politicians to speak softly and carry a big stick. John Major seems increasingly to have opted for the exact opposite, speaking loudly but carrying a stick so modest that no one is fooled by the threat of it. For if ever a political problem exemplified the need to plan for a conflict it has been the beef crisis. Mr Major wants to solve the problems of Britain's beef producers. But the only solid and secure way of doing that is by taking BSE seriously as a public health problem, working in concert with all those who are likely to have an interest, agreeing a line and then sticking to it. Britain has not done that — or rather it has done a limited number of things too grudgingly, too late and too inconsistently. To speak loudly is therefore to show the fundamental weakness of the British position not its strength.

It is always necessary to remember that the BSE outbreak in Britain has been far larger than anywhere else in the world, has gone on much longer and has been tackled with much less ruthlessness than the much smaller outbreaks elsewhere. All this was true before the government itself acknowledged that BSE in cattle could be connected with CJD in humans. That was the immediate reason why the European Union imposed a blanket ban. That decision was not an irrational spasm by crazed and illogical foreigners who are incapable of understanding scientific advice. It was an entirely logical position taken on the basis of

the scientific evidence as advanced by Britain itself. If anyone has acted and voted politically in this it has been the British, not those who took the scientific and veterinary advice and wanted to ensure that the disease was localised.

But the other problem with British policy over the past two months is that it has been so inconsistent and illogical. The last two months have been miserable for British beef farmers, especially for those whose attention to proper precautions has meant that they have never had a suggestion of BSE in their herds. Some nations are more hypocritical than others. But vets and ministers would be acting irresponsibly if they took risks. They have to take BSE ultra-seriously. Britain, by adopting inconsistent approaches to the problem and appearing to conjure solutions out of the air, undermines that inescapable seriousness. Douglas Hogg has done real harm to the cause of beef farmers by this approach to policy-making. To have allowed this technical problem to get caught up in the Conservative Party's dance of death with Europe was to guarantee that a problem-solving approach would be sacrificed for rhetorical posturing. That does no favours to producers or consumers. It is not surprising that the voters blame the government rather than the Europeans or the farmers for the crisis. The beef crisis remains soluble, but only by long-term measures and a recognition that the BSE question is a real one, not treating it as imaginary.

Pineapples and banana skins

But turnstile prices give football fans the right to laugh

FOOTBALL fans are renowned for their undying loyalty to their teams. But fans often also feel that the clubs take that loyalty for granted. One of the unpleasant ways that fans get their own back on football has been violence. But there has always been a more acceptable tactic — terrace humour. The success of Nick Hornby's Fever Pitch and of BBC TV's Fantasy Football programme is partly due to their skill in tapping into this mordant side of fan and fanzine culture. By making fun of players, the fans are also making fun of themselves and their own obsessions.

Few clubs are without a player — normally either a hopeless striker or a clumsy defender — at whom the fans love to laugh. In extreme cases, some clubs can even field eleven such players. Jason Lee's tragedy is that because of television he has become the first player that everybody laughs at, irrespective of club loyalty. David Baddiel

and Frank Skinner have transformed an obscure Notts Forest striker into a figure of national ridicule on account of his pineapple shaped hair-cut and a succession of spectacularly missed chances. Yesterday Lee buckled. He was put on the transfer list, allegedly because his confidence has been wrecked by TV's lalish duo.

It is hard not to feel sympathy for Lee. It is not nice to see anyone mocked because of their appearance, least of all if there is a racial dimension to the mockery. There is no joy either in witnessing the besieging media claim yet another celeb victim. But at the end of the day football is about putting the ball in the back of the net, Brian. Or in Lee's case, about not doing so. As a fan, you sometimes don't know whether to laugh or cry when your overpaid striker shoots wide yet again from two yards out. But at the prices that the fans now pay, they are entitled to a laugh.



Letters to the Editor

Europe's meaty debate

Our readers put road rage in the psychiatrist's driving seat

YOUR leader on the beef crisis (By Jingo for July, May 22) came as a welcome antidote to the anti-European hysteria being whipped up by the Government. BSE has not been eradicated from the British beef herd, and government controls have thus far not prevented some infected material from entering the food chain. Therefore how can the Government continue to assert the safety of British beef?

The limited cull that Douglas Hogg has offered Europe has nothing to do with eradicating BSE from the herds, and our European partners are quite right to be sceptical. The Government has taken an unacceptable gamble with our lives. Until BSE has been completely removed from the food chain, or until it is proved that BSE does not spread spongiform encephalopathy in humans, it is reasonable to expect foreign governments to protect their people.

John Major's petulant gesture over the failure to lift the ban on derivatives proves how completely he is at the mercy of his Euro-sceptics. When the US, Canada and Australia banned our beef, we did not make threats of non-cooperation in Nato or anywhere else.

great extent of its population's interest in health issues. This is the genuine reason behind their refusal to lift the ban on British beef. It embarrasses me to see John Major giving up to the pressures of conspiracy theories.

After 10 years of research, knowledge on BSE must have made gigantic advances in two months, because Stephen Dorrell's announcement to the Commons about the possible link with CJD had to be based on the best scientific evidence available. Otherwise, he made a colossal mistake.

MAJOR'S posturing is as morally justified as Britain's position in the opium wars. It is typical of our government's understanding of industry and commerce that it is content to encourage the supply of cheap and defective products, then wants to force the world to buy them.

AFTER the latest failed attempt to get the EU ban on beef lifted, Malcolm Rifkind said that the decision was purely political, in spite of all scientific evidence that British beef is safe to eat.

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FIRST France has a strike wave, now Germany. Clearly there is a lot to be said for not eating British beef.

ONE of the major reasons for road rage (How to curb rage, Leader, May 21) is surely that when a driver makes a mistake, it is virtually impossible to say "sorry", if for example, I accidentally bump into someone in a pub and spill their drink I can, through verbalisation and body language, satisfy them that it was my mistake and show I am suitably repentant.

SO-CALLED road rage does indeed need to be put into perspective, but not quite as your editorial suggests. The vast majority of those who are killed or injured on the roads are killed or injured by the normal, criminal negligence of motorists. On average, about 10 people die on our roads every day. Unlike the killer of Mr Cameron, these motorists can expect trivial pseudo-penalties and very little attention by the media.

ROAD rage is not confined to those driving a car. Pedestrians can experience the same unbridled anger. It is linked to our perception of vehicles as monsters. The reaction is a response triggered by our collective unconscious, established in pre-history, to protect ourselves and our families from wild beasts. But above the beast of our collective unconscious is the motor vehicle.

Grown-up stuff

SO like, I read the Guardian on Thursday and it's like, the film Kids doesn't have much of a plot, right (Derek Malcolm's review, May 16)? It's a dumb fantasy about skinny naked guys and girls in tiny T-shirts, kinda paedophile chic, and like, yeah man, "Where are the adults?"

It's something Derek Malcolm gets close to asking. Well, they're in the audience, reassuring each other. Malcolm asks if Kids is "the truth", and should know better. I spent a year in America and frequently saw clubs frequented by people who were 14-ish of their face — and this was the middle of the week. They did know the reasons, and at 4 o'clock, when we left, they would carry their skateboards off down Broadway.



One of my over-riding impressions of New York was that America had left these kids to it — New York was their city, more than anyone else's.

This film should be subtitled Adults, as the fantasies, blindness and lack of morality in reactions to it are the (predictable) shocking thing here. This film is not the dumb fantasy of dirty old man. It is about AIDS, and an environment where AIDS can

act as a metaphor (frightening). Darryn Baker, University of Sussex, Brighton BN1 9SA.

Please include a full postal address, even on e-mailed letters, and a telephone number. We may edit letters; shorter ones are more likely to appear. We regret we cannot acknowledge those not used.

Small shake-up

THE Victoria and Albert Museum is a boring and inconvenient building containing great treasure badly displayed (Letters, May 21). If the lateral extension, Daniel Libeskind's new building can alleviate this, then this will be a great improvement.

God forbid any repetition of the grey wasteland of the National Gallery extension. The exterior is exciting in a way that modern English buildings seldom are, although I do wonder whether this is just my reaction against the general debased eclecticism of recent new buildings in London. Peter Shield, 20 Willerby Road, Woodthorpe, Nottingham NG5 4PB.

A loan is not a future

JOHN Gray (Money matters) states that "there is no way in which the expansion of higher education can be maintained without transferring some of the cost to its ultimate beneficiaries". Absolutely — now let's ask ourselves who these ultimate beneficiaries are.

Who benefits from having nurses, doctors and teachers — mainly the individuals pursuing such careers or society as a whole? I suggest the latter. The community as a whole should pay for it through the taxation system.

Labour's new policy fails to address the question of payment of unemployment benefit to students over the summer vacation. Without a commitment to restoration of this benefit talk of broadening access is just cruel rhetoric. Simon Hewitt, Vice-chair/Secretary, Brunel Labour Students, Brunel University, Uxbridge UB8 3PH.

A Country Diary

HIGHLANDS: Not a week goes by now without me hearing of predators attacking poultry and taking the other way out. The latest incident happened to my nearest neighbour half a mile away. Some time between 5.30 and seven in the evening, a predator killed two small hens, leaving one headless corpse in the garden and taking the other away. The blame was laid squarely at the door of a pine marten although the animal was not seen. At the house in question other birds have been taken in the past and, on at least one occasion, the animal — a pine marten — was caught in a hutch for cockerels, most of which were dead or dying in the Highlands.

DESPITE what you say, we welcomed the new technology colleges and believe their specialism can be developed in partnership with other local schools (Labour backs aptitude tests for technology college pupils, May 21). On the tests, we pointed out that the research would not be published until after the next election. A new government might consider using them to assist with value-added performance research. The Technology College Trust, which currently encourages banding as a way of achieving a fully comprehensive intake, might use the tests to assist them in developing their policy. David Blunkett (MP), Shadow Secretary for Education and Employment, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

Hurd but not seen in Bosnia

ED VULLIAMY makes a convincing case for America's part in ducking the issue of military intervention in the early days of the Bosnian conflict (America's big strategic lie, May 20).

But it was, in fact, the British ex-Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd who "led the consensus" at a meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers in September 1991, in opposing the introduction of an international force into Yugoslavia to establish the conditions for peace.

Had this proposal been unanimously backed by the EC, America would have been unlikely to oppose it, especially as the US Secretary of State James Baker had, by that time, a number of misgivings over his earlier insistence on maintaining the unitary state.

Moreover, given the opposition to Serbian President Milosevic within Serbia at the time, and the Yugoslav army recruitment problems, due to massive draft-dodging by Serbs reluctant to kill people they perhaps still perceived as their fellow countrymen, it is probable that the serious threat of military action by a united European Community, which the war was still confined to Croatia would have prevented it from escalating to Bosnia at all. Carole Hodge, Research Fellow, Institute of Russian and East European Studies, University of Glasgow, 29 Bute Gardens, Glasgow G12 8RS.

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John 20150

Diary
Matthew Norman

WITH presidential elections looming, Bill Clinton continues to dodge danger with immense grace. His latest escape concerns the civil law suit of Paula Jones, who seeks compensation for what the law calls "improper behaviour" or "blatantly inappropriate" or "flashing his willy in an Arkansas hotel room and angling for a blowjob", as Mary Whitehouse insists on calling it. Desperate to stop the case being heard before the election, Clinton argued that no acting president can be sued — but with that claim en route to a Supreme Court packed with Republicans, fears were growing. However, with such a chutzpah, the brilliant Irish lawyer and White House Council member Jack Quinn has come up with another idea: since the US President is US Commander-in-Chief, he says, Mr Clinton is on active military duty — and under the Soldiers and Sailors Act of 1940, actions against military personnel are automatically stayed until their active duty is over. The point looks absolute, the watertight, the irony — Mr Clinton has always been so keen to join the army — is simply gorgeous.

NEWS that my friend Mandy Mandelson (we had a little spat, you will recall, but we made up now) was the only New Labour character at last week's dinner for Jacques Chirac has failed to delight his colleagues. He only went because one else wanted to, "sniffs" someone in Gordon Brown's office. How convincing. Dinner with the President of France, or a quiet night in with the telly? You can see why poor old Andy got lumbered, can't you?

HEAR suggestions that my old friend Douglas Hogg, the agriculture minister, may have fallen short of perfection in his handling of the BSE crisis, and is to be reshuffled in the next reshuffle. People say he is not only useless but horrendously arrogant too. I find this very hard to believe. Why, only a few weeks ago, when the crisis was at its most intense, his European counterparts wanted to arrange an emergency meeting on a Saturday. Douglas wasn't having it. "I don't work Saturdays," he intoned. "I go home to Sarah on Saturdays." Bless his heart, he's doing the best he can.

F Douglas does stay in the Cabinet, this may be connected with a sense of loyalty Mr Major feels towards Sarah. While he was Chancellor, the now Lady Hogg was not only a key adviser (she persuaded him that the ERM was a splendid idea), but also Economics Editor of the Daily Telegraph. During the Tory leadership election in 1990, the then Mrs Hogg was asked in the editorial conference if she thought the paper ought to support Mr Major. Certainly not, she said. Major was too fragile, too inexperienced and too immature, and he simply wasn't ready for the job. The Telegraph went for Douglas Hogg and shortly after Mr Major's victory, Mrs Hogg left the Telegraph to take up another position... as head of the Prime Minister's policy unit in Number 10.

THE Police Bravery Awards ceremony is today at the Savoy. Neither the Police Federation nor the Sun, the event's sponsor, will discuss the guest of honour's identity, on grounds of state security. I wouldn't mention that it is, in fact, John Major, had Michael Howard not blurted it out to last week's Police Federation conference in Scarborough. Must be one of those colds of his coming on.

IN today's look at Brandreth's Brainstorm, the Chester MP's diverting puzzle page in OK magazine, we come to "Celebrity Square". Three celebrities — Zoe Ball, Peter Bowles and Norman Bowler — are pictured, and your task is two-fold: first, work out what they have in common (that's Ball, Bowles and Bowler, concentrate); and then decide in which order they should appear. It's just so devilishly clever, isn't it? The electors of Chester should be very proud.



Frogs and krauts fill heads with hate

Commentary Martin Kettle

IT comes as a shock to be reminded just how easily the British can don the mantle of a nation at war. You spoke for Britain, Nicholas Winterbottom told John Major in the Commons on Tuesday, consciously repeating the resonant words which Leo Amery uttered during the real crisis of 1940. Many who listened to Major's statement also caught echoes of Neville Chamberlain's broadcast of September 1939. Major goes To War At Last and the front-page headline in the Daily Mail. The Sun adorned its front cover with a picture of Churchill. And yesterday morning the Press Association was even reporting the formation of a War Cabinet.

Of course it is not war really. No one is actually going to get killed in this battle with our foes across the main — unless you count several thousand dumb and perhaps cluffed cattle who will be chucked senseless and incinerated in the cause over the coming weeks. But the spirit of something very similar to war is on the march and we must all decide whether we will join its ranks or not. Among the European nations this could probably only happen in Britain and Greece, though conceivably also in Russia. For among the EU nations it is only in Britain that there is this genuine and deep cultural yearning to relive the last war, and for the nation to stand historically apart from its neighbours. Anyone who thought that this instinct was dead, laid gently to rest in the long prosperous European reconciliations of the second half of the 20th century, must think again.

The pent-up resentments of British nationalism have found another cause to rally for. By threatening non-cooperation with Europe, John Major has not just made the latest tactical manoeuvre in the long struggle to control the Conservative Party. He has let a nationalist genie out of the bottle which he will find it hard to put back. Note the Mail's "war at last". These are happy, fulfilled people. This is finally a part of the nation at ease with itself. A nation at war. Or playing the part of a nation at war. If nothing else, the last 48 hours offer a very salutary reminder of the grip in which the second world war still holds large and influential sections of the British nation. To those who grew up in 1950s

and 1960s, the war seemed to be parental business, not ours. Yet we have turned out to be carriers too. Fourteen years ago, many were surprised by the capacity of the Falklands crisis to reawaken a bastard version of the wartime spirit. Now, fully 51 years after the end of the last European war, an even more bizarre mutation of the bulldog spirit is on view in the battle for British beef. In some ways the true emotional parallel this week is not the grim determination of September 1939, when there was an overwhelming sense that the nation was embarking on a hazardous and perhaps terminal war against a ruthless, evil and powerful enemy. Nor is it the summer of 1940, when Britain genuinely stood alone in the cause of the peoples of Europe. A much more real parallel is surely with the glad confident morning of August 1914. The truly striking characteristic of the Conservative Party this week has been its cathartic delight. One recognises in the Tories a version, albeit a degenerate one, of "Now God be thanked who has matched us with his hour! And caught our youth, and wakened us from sleeping." We are heading back into the world of Oh What A Lovely War. This is not an entirely fanciful parallel, though it actually leads towards a conclusion which the Europhobes

will not like. In earlier times the struggle for international markets was a cause of real wars. If this was 1896 not 1996, the fleet would almost certainly be steaming for Wilhelmshaven.

enough about the gene, about how to advise women as to their best course of action, about how to predict the effects of the mutations. Most scientists working in the field see it as unconscionable that a test should be offered over the counter at this stage; it should instead be offered in a research setting, with genetic counselling and counselling back-up. Some even argue that all testing should be done anonymously at this stage, as we are not in a position to know exactly what the results mean. But even those who occupy the middle ground, and who believe women are entitled to know, argue that high-level counselling is vital.



Wars of the genes

Ellen Solomon argues that the potential of the 'breast-cancer' gene must not be jeopardised by private profit, while below, David King calls for democratic decision-making

WHEN the last 18 months or so, scientists have at an unprecedented rate been isolating genes whose mutations lead to diseases. Progress has been so rapid that even those working in the field are finding it difficult to keep up with developments. Until recently, most human geneticists were looking to isolate genes in which mutations lead to rare inherited disorders with clear-cut genetic patterns, and which

often affect children, such as cystic fibrosis, or muscular dystrophy. But as the power to analyse DNA has increased dramatically — helped by new mathematical models and computer programs — attention has focused more on the genetic component of much more common adult diseases, such as diabetes, heart disease and cancer. It is this rapid progress in isolating genes whose mutations can lead to cancer, and in particular breast cancer, that is provoking a furious

debate in the United States. This week a coalition of hundreds of women's and health groups formed to oppose a biotechnology company's attempt to patent a gene linked with breast cancer. Myriad Genetics, a Utah-based company, wants to patent the gene it identified in 1994, known as BRCA1. Women with a mutated version of the gene have an 85 per cent chance of developing breast cancer; Myriad plans to charge them \$600 for testing kits to screen for it. Myriad isolated BRCA1 after a highly publicised, high-profile race among many labs around the world. In many cases, the early research had been funded by charities and governments; but Myriad poured large sums of money into the later stages. It claims that only by gaining a patent can it recoup

Business gets the upper hand

THE new American coalition set up to oppose the patenting of the BRCA1 gene argues that human genes are the property of society at large. In Britain the response to the issue has been much slower. Breast Cancer Care is supporting the US campaign, as is the Genetics Forum, a specialist group which campaigns on genetic-engineering issues. In fact, campaigns against patents on life (including patents on plants and even animals) have been running for years. They have had

notable successes, such as the rejection by the European Parliament last year of an EU directive to allow such patents. But even though multinational companies have already patented more than 1,300 human genes, campaigners say they have great difficulty getting most people to see the issues' relevance. Yet, as the US activists have noted, there is a link to the much more widely discussed problems raised by the revolution in human genetics: genetic discrimination and eugenics. The real question underlying

debates over patenting, insurance discrimination and premature marketing of genetic tests directly to the public is whether genetics is being driven by the public interest or by commerce. In the US it is very clear that commerce has the upper hand. The business-as-usual approach gives industry a free hand, and relegates awkward ethical and social problems that arise to committees. Where is the public's voice in all this? Decisions on research are taken in corporate boardrooms and in "public" funding com-

mittees composed entirely of scientists. But the public has a vital interest in deciding, for example, whether we spend 22 billion of taxpayers' money on the Human Genome Project. The UK Medical Research Council is currently deciding whether it will fund a search for genes which influence IQ, with all the massive social implications that arise. The public is frozen out of such decisions. The Genetics Forum says it plans to campaign for a genetic privacy law, but the problems raised by genetics are much bigger than that. Although a privacy law would help, the idea that genetics is a purely private matter partly reinforces the problem. It is in the

public interest to find a way to prevent parents' private decisions in the clinic from creating a consensus that increasingly minor genetic disabilities are grounds for abortion. The key problem is that there is a democratic deficit. Now is the time, before genetics overwhelms us with ever more impossible dilemmas, to create truly democratic mechanisms for ensuring that science is applied in the public interest. The alternative, the current combination of scientific careerism and naked commercialism, is a sure recipe for disaster.

Dr David King, a former geneticist, edits the newsletter GenEthics News

Housing to let — but what's the cost?



Natasha Walter

THE Government says: "Yes, it hurt," as if they could consign their own policies to history. But why the past tense? For some people, the hurt goes on. "The homeless" have sometimes become a metaphor rather than a reality; a metaphor for the cruelty of the free market, or of the senselessness of young people. But their lives are complicated, ongoing, real. Mr All (not his real name), a quiet, dignified chap, lives in west London with his wife and child. We meet in his local centre for the homeless, where he softly recites his story. He has medical problems, and can't work. For a time he rented a one-room flat, but it was squallid and tiny and cost more than his housing benefit. So he became homeless, and Westminster Council stepped in.

She lives with her husband and four children, one of whom is deaf. Their own house was repossessed in 1990 when they couldn't keep up the mortgage repayments. Since becoming homeless they have lived at four different addresses, moving the children from school to school. At one time, the six of them spent eight months in one room in a hotel. Eventually, the council found them their present home, a grossly private residential care home. "The council says they can't do anything more for us, but this flat needs so much work, it's horrible. The landlord won't do the work, but we can't because we don't know how long we'll be here. You can't live like this, it's not home," she says hopefully.

Research published this week by the London Research Centre shows that Mrs Smith is frighteningly typical. Most of the homeless households placed in the private sector by local authorities had little security, relying on short-term tenancies of six months or a year. The continual question was: what next? — haunts them, and that Mrs Smith tells. Mrs X found that her fear about what might happen next had rubbed off on her daughter, who was seeing a child psychologist, and "thought her mother was about to move home and leave her behind".

MORE, the policy of paying expensive, private-sector rents through housing benefit can grip unemployed families in a vicious poverty trap. Low-paid work is no good to them, because it won't cover the loss of their housing benefit, and so they get stuck doing nothing in order to keep a roof over their heads. Even if it hurts, does this policy work? Chris Holmes, the director of Shelter, has tried to convince the Government that it's not just for moral reasons that they should rethink the policy of using the private rented sector to cover up gaps in social housing. "It's misguided and expensive," he says succinctly. A government that chooses to pay landlords rather than act as the landlord faces a vast and growing housing benefit bill. Up and up it goes, now rising over £10 billion a year. In little ways and big ways, the homeless can show that when people get hurt, the state isn't really working.

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George Malcolm Thomson

Beaverbrook's sharpest pen

GEORGE Malcolm Thomson's relationship with Lord Beaverbrook was complex. There were occasions on which Beaverbrook would ride around his estate with Thomson following on horseback taking notes. Thomson said it made him feel like Marshal Ney to Beaverbrook's Napoleon. Percy Cudlipp retorted, "You mean Marshal Yea."

This was an excellent quip but not the whole story. The other side of the coin would show Thomson as more like an *émancipé gris* who knew what Beaverbrook was thinking five minutes before Beaverbrook did — and if he didn't like that thought he would head it off at the post.

Unlike other Beaverbrook courtiers he was allowed the licence of a jester or a Shakespearean Fool to point out the Old Man's lapses from wisdom. One example was when Beaverbrook as a government minister during the war for some reason had the idea of hiding aircraft in Winchester Cathedral. Thomson is credited with having squashed this bizarre enterprise.

He was born in the 19th century in Leith, and he fought in the first world war. After Edinburgh University he went into journalism and wrote two books about the history of Scotland. These impressed Beaverbrook, who installed him at the London Evening Standard reviewing books and writing paragraphs for the *Londoner's Diary* and the *Sunday Express's* Cross-bencher column.

Thomson, who was quick-witted in every sense, soon learnt to mimic the Beaverbrook staccato style and was ghosting the Beaver's articles

and speeches. Early in the war Churchill made Beaverbrook Minister of Aircraft Production and Thomson went with him as his principal private secretary. This made him a prototype Sir Humphrey of Yes, Minister. Throughout the war he stayed with Beaverbrook in various ministries and in the war cabinet, and he accompanied him on three trips to Washington and on his mission to Stalin in Moscow. Having worked 12 hours a day for three months, he was rebuffed by the Beaver for taking a day off. For all that, Thomson said it was the

most interesting period of his life. After the war he returned to Fleet Street as chief leader writer of the *Daily Express* under the editorship of Arthur Christiansen, Edward Pickering and Bob Edwards, and he was also chief book-reviewer for the *Evening Standard*.

As chief leader writer he was always his master's voice, and with cynical indifference cheerfully admitted that he often wrote things he didn't agree with. He saw his role as that of an advocate who is employed to present his client's case as persuasively as possible. If you

wanted to put it another way, he would not quarrel if his role was compared to that of a prostitute.

Thomson was in constant contact with the Old Man. He would for example, phone with the details of the Chancellor's Budget speech. Beaverbrook would say "Tars" or bark a curt phrase. Then Thomson would write a leader which was in effect an interview with the proprietor. Sometimes the result verged on parody, a notion which the twinkle in Thomson's eye and his mischievous expression did nothing to dispel.

His colleagues were in awe of his ability as a leader-writer, but never more so than when he wrote from the heart. His leaders on the death of Churchill, and of Beaverbrook, are especially remembered. From time to time the Old Man would go over the pages of his various newspapers, examining every item in detail. When he came to Osbert Lancaster's Pocket Cartoon he would ask, "What's the point of Osbert Lancaster?" This was difficult to explain to someone without a sense of humour. Thomson would reply that even if Lancaster appeared to only a few hundred thousand readers and was meaningless to the rest, he was (like Beachcomber) one of the things that made the *Express* distinctively different from its rival, the *Daily Mail*.

Evidently Thomson swung the Old Man round to his point of view because in 1948 Beaverbrook sent Osbert a message congratulating him on a cartoon which was "as brilliant a piece of work as anything I have seen in the *Daily Express*". Osbert Lancaster invented



Courtly wit... Thomson played jester to the Beaver

watch-setting precision of his arrivals and departures to and from the Coach and Horses in Bampstead. He inspired universal admiration and affection. In manner he was courteous, polite, unassuming and pukka. He enjoyed life. In a birthday speech some years ago he said he would like to live for ever. It was his one ambition to live to 101, which would

mean that he had lived through three centuries. "It's a simple ambition, rather childish," he said. Sadly it was not to be fulfilled. Even so, he made it to nearly 97, which isn't bad.

Richard Boston
George Malcolm Thomson, journalist, born August 2, 1899; died May 20, 1996

Julius Marmur

Giant leap in genetics

WORKING in the 1950s with Paul M Doty at Harvard University, the biochemist and geneticist Julius Marmur, who has died aged 70, made the unexpected discovery that after being pulled apart biochemically, strands of genetic material (DNA) possess the natural ability to recombine into their correct functional form.

The significance of this discovery, on which much of modern genetic engineering and laboratory hybridisation now rests, was not grasped at that time even by the world's leading molecular genetics research groups. James Watson, who in 1953 with Francis Crick and Maurice Wilkins published the famous but then still hypothetical double-helix structure of DNA, acknowledges that Marmur's crucial discovery fell on scientifically unresponsive ground.

It would be two decades before Paul Berg working with bacterial genetic material and using bacteriophages (bacterial viruses) as carriers of DNA fragments, was able to show that DNA recombination and the specific deletion and insertion of genetic material into an existing organism's genome is not merely possible but, within limits, a natural process. However, when the huge range of new possibilities became clear, including those of the transfer of genetic material from widely separated species, a process that is essentially unnatural — Berg rang the scientific alarm bells vigorously. In 1978 an emergency conference called for the tight control of all experimental research involving genetic transfer.

Marmur, who by 1970 was professor of biochemistry and molecular genetics at the Albert Einstein College in the Bronx and deeply involved in new academic experimental criteria, played a role with Berg and others in the subsequent framing of guidelines for the ethical control of all recombinant DNA techniques. The furor simply confirmed that as in much of science, Marmur's seemingly simple discovery that DNA strands will reassemble naturally, although only belatedly understood and exploited, opened up a wide and challenging range of new options.

Once it became possible to select fragments of DNA and insert them into the genetic material of a new host, then the loudly trumpeted concept and practice of gene therapy could become reality. However, it also became possible to breach natural barriers

and produce cross-species hybrids — the artificial creation of transgenic animals — an experimental pathway which, according to fellow biochemists, Marmur found distasteful and unacceptable. Yet his discovery, and Berg's triumph and warning, were preceded by many experiments attempting the transfer of DNA.

The initial demonstration that DNA is the essential genetic material was confirmed by Oswald Avery and Maclyn McCarty in the 1940s who showed that specific strains of bacteria can be transformed in culture to another strain through treatment with highly purified DNA. Subsequently, many others attempted to modify microorganisms by culturing them in conditions rich with DNA and RNA from other species of organisms.

Now, a successful, primary because the host organism's genetic material was intact, closed, and hence inaccessible. But the identification of DNA as the transforming principle resulted in the focus of research on its structure and, in particular, on the biochemical mechanisms of coding which enabled it to encrypt huge amounts of structural information.

In retrospect it can be seen that in the 1960s the emerging infant science of molecular genetics was so obsessed with the questions of coding, the structure that Marmur's crucial discovery went unremarked and unrewarded in any major way. As a successful academic who remained in research and in advisory bodies throughout his life, there is nothing to suggest bitterness.

Marmur was born in Poland but emigrated with his family to Canada during the prewar anti-Jewish turmoil. In 1946 he graduated from McGill University, where he also took his master's degree, travelling to give a State University to gain his doctorate in bacterial physiology in the early 1950s. Already involved in the isolation and purification of DNA and revealing unusual gifts as an experimental scientist, he was invited to work at Harvard with Paul Doty, one of the most eminent biochemists and physiologists of the era. The result was a triumph, long unsung. He leaves a wife, Mildred, and two sons.

Anthony Tucker
Julius Marmur, biochemist and geneticist, born March 22, 1926; died May 20, 1996

Willis Conover

The voice of jazz for 100 million listeners



Time for jazz... Conover at work on Voice Of America's Music USA programme

IN THE days when Afro-American music was not just a minority interest but practically a samizdat operation, conducted even in Britain via a humble home-made crystal set and the very small print of the *Melody Maker's* US News column, one of its beacons was Willis Conover, presenter of the nightly *Voice of America* jazz programme, who has died of lung cancer aged 76.

Time... for... jazz... Conover's mission, which would announce in a sort of American version of received pronunciation, before a trenchantly synopsed piano figure introduced the full Duke Ellington Orchestra and the programme's signature tune, *Take the A Train*. After a few bars the voice would return, keeping its stately cadence as a courtesy to listeners in non-English speaking countries. "This is Willis Conover in Washington DC, with the *Voice of America Jazz Hour*." And from Nottingham to Novosibirsk, hearts would beat a little faster.

A State Department-sponsored station, VOA was beamed principally at the people's republics of eastern Europe, where a fondness for hot rhythms and blues tonality constituted a prize catch evidence of deviancy. The communist regimes hated jazz, recognising a symbol of spontaneity and self-expression. This made Conover a front-line cold warrior (more effective than a squadron of B2s, they used to say) and his programmes a target for defensive reaction.

Those of us who spent our teenage years switching from Frank Tenot and Daniel Fili-

pacchi's mid-evening programme Pour ce qui aime le jazz on Europe 1 to Conover on VOA grew accustomed to having our enjoyment of the interrupted by the activities of technicians, presumably operating from secret bases in the Urals. Without warning, the delicate inventions of Miles Davis's *Flamenco Sketches* or the driving hard bop of Horace Silver's *Señor Blues* would disappear beneath a hailstorm of static which might last five minutes or, if the commissars were feeling conspicuously vindictive, the rest of the week.

No doubt these offensives could have been plotted against the curve of the White House-Kremlin relationship. And inevitably they did nothing other than make an already exotic music seem even more magically appealing to those listeners — an estimated 100 million worldwide, 30 million of them in communist Europe — doomed to languish many thousands of miles away from 52nd Street.

Conover was born in New York State, the son of a serving soldier. He made his debut as a radio announcer while at college in Maryland, and won his first professional job in a talent contest. The chance hearing of Charlie Barnet's famous version of *Cherokee* led to his interest in jazz as a mainstream beginning which led to an interest in most styles and eras of a music then going through a period of often disconcertingly rapid evolution.

He became a jazz disc-jockey on a radio station in Washington during the war. When he began to promote

live concerts he was credited with hastening the desegregation of the city's nightclubs. He began his 40-year stint at the VOA in 1955 and soon proved that although he may have sounded like a square, his taste was admirably non-aligned. He played the sweet swing of Les Brown and Artie Shaw in the big band section of his programme, but was just as likely to feature the challenging music of John Coltrane and Charles Mingus in the pure-jazz segment later in the evening.

Wary of the sort of relationship with a government-run organisation that would inevitably lead to accusations of being a Central Intelligence Agency stooge, he maintained his distance by refusing a staff position and operating as a freelance contractor. On the air he avoided any sort of political content, realising that the music spoke for itself, both for and sometimes against the system in which it had been created.

Married and divorced five times, on the last occasion to a listener from China, he continued to broadcast while his cancer was being treated. Unlike the BBC World Service, the VOA could not be heard by the people of its own country, which meant that Conover was practically unknown in his homeland. But elsewhere his name was as familiar as any president's; and surely no president earned more goodwill and gratitude outside his own shore.

Richard Williams
Willis Conover, broadcaster, born December 78, 1920; died May 17, 1996

Jackdaw
the doctors at Alcor. In other words, the doctors touch prefer living with their dead loved ones in their refrigerators.

Big chill
IMAGINE being flattened by a truck or succumbing to a terminal illness only to wake up in the 23rd century alive, healthy, and in desperate need of a new wardrobe. For 31 "dead" folks in the wilds of Scottsdale, Ariz, this idea is more than just science fiction. It's a way of life — or rather death. Thanks to the Alcor Life Extension Foundation — the world's largest provider of cryonic services (aka "the deep freeze") — funerals are now for suckers. And so is the traditional grieving process. "We are through living with our dead loved ones in our hearts," say

beneficiary (this will help pay your rent during your future "downtime"). Then, die. Alcor handles the rest. There's a little open heart surgery to infuse your body with "antifreeze".

So, if the idea of waiting for medical science to figure out how to reconnect your old dead head with a new live body sounds like your bag, here's what you need to do: First, get a good life insurance plan and sign up Alcor as the sole

While the cost — \$50,000 to \$120,000 — for a full freeze may sound prohibitive, 377 death-defiers have signed up for the ultimate commitment. This includes a slew of twenty-somethings who have taken advantage of Alcor's "reduced rates for students".

Please stop
PETER LUFF: "I'm something of a depository now for people's concerns about influences in the media, and I've had some of the most extraordinary pop music lyrics.

Holy cow
IT HAS been reported recently in the *Huntsville Times, USA*, that a 10-year-old, 1,000lb Holstein cow has been found under extremely "weird" circumstances. Sue Pitts, the assistant State Director for MUFON, from Huntsville, investigated the scene. She found an eight inch deep, six inch wide, eight and a half inch long incision at the base of the cow's neck. This is just the latest in an epidemic of cattle mutilations whose victims now number over 30.

Prayer school
FOR the past 21 years St Casimir's, Kintbury, has been the retreat par excellence for youngsters still at school. Fifty years ago, the De La Salle brothers first arrived at the splendid manor house with its large grounds and used it as a junior novitiate; but in 1975 it was the genius of Damien Lundy, hymn-writer and compiler of the much-used Songs of the Spirit folk collections, that cracked the

hard nut of how to give retreats to teenagers. Several thousand now come to Kintbury in school parties every year. One pupil went back saying: "Why can't all RE lessons be like that?"

What is the secret? One element is the presence on the team of young people who come for a year straight from school and bridge the gap between generations. Another is the ambience of the prayer

rooms: in one there are dozens of sabbags for sinking deep into meditation; in another, for night prayer, candles and rugs form a cosy space under the eaves. A big candle is passed from person to person and each prays from the heart about their own concerns.

Written prayers left behind inspire: "I don't want to be selfish but I would like to pray for myself... I don't know whether I am pregnant or not"; and "Dear Lord, I've just read a letter to you from another girl in Wales. She thinks she's pregnant. Lord, help her, guide her. I really feel for her."

Encounters
THE ART OF HERBY FRENCH... ENCOUNTERS... on the hoof

Wiry hair
THE Hillary's Hair Multimedia Studio... Emily Sheffield

A 45-second rock video of some of the ever-changing First Hair set to some appropriate music from the Clintons' wilder era. **Mighty Morph'n' Hillary's** 335 K - PC/Mac/UNIX. A short QuickTime movie showcasing the best of a First Lady's hair styles in a constantly changing morph. **Hillary's Hair Saver** 80 K - Mac Only. An After Dark compatible screen saver saluting the First Lady's hair and the web site that brought it to the world. **Hillary's Hair Concentration** 200 K - Mac Version Win 95/NT Version 1.0 MB - Mac/Win 95/NT. A great 3-D game involving the First Lady herself and a bit of skill. Just a sample of the confounded delights available on <http://www.hillaryshair.com>

Jackdaw wants your jewels. E-mail jackdaw@guardian.co.uk; fax 0171-713 4368; Jackdaw, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER.

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Finance Guardian

Consortium withdraws £1bn buy-back plan after Granada decides against selling French chain

Sir Rocco drops hotels bid

Sir Rocco Forte last night surprised the City by withdrawing his £1 billion bid to buy back part of his old hotel empire from Granada, after Granada decided against selling Meridien, its French hotel chain.

Earlier, Granada itself surprised the City by performing its second U-turn on Meridien, announcing that it intended to keep the business "for the immediate future".

Granada, which won Meridien as part of its £3.9 billion acquisition of Forte in January, had said during the contest that it would sell the business. Even earlier it had insisted it would keep Meridien.

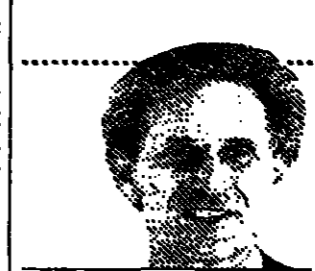
News of the volte-face came as Granada began the biggest ever sale of some of the world's most glittering hotels, announcing that it had completed its appraisal of Forte's luxury hotel assets, and confirming that most were for sale. Granada shares fell 10p to 814p on the news.

The 17 hotels, the sale of which will be supervised by Granada's financial adviser Lazari Brothers, are expected to fetch at least £800 million. They include London's Grosvenor House Hotel, thought to be worth at least £450 million; the George V in Paris; the Plaza Athénée in Paris and New York; London's Hyde Park Hotel; the Ritz in Madrid; the Eden in Rome; and the Sandy Lane in Barbados. However, not included in the sale is London's Waldorf Hotel, which has been rebranded under the Meridien name.

Granada chairman Gerry Robinson said the company believed that it would create more value for shareholders by keeping Meridien, and "significantly improving their performance" than it would by selling them. But Charles Allen, Granada's chief executive, denied that the group's decision to keep Meridien was a U-turn. He said: "The decision will disappoint a lot of people, as we have received a lot of enquiries, but we are coming from a position of strength. Meridien was in pretty bad shape when we acquired it, but we are convinced that there's a lot of potential there, and that we can realise it."

Notebook

Mexican wave for Camdessus



Edited by Alex Brummer

ANYONE betting on a third term for the International Monetary Fund's managing director, Jacques Camdessus, in the aftermath of the Madrid annual meeting in 1994, would have been labelled a lunatic.

It was in Madrid, remember, when a curious alliance of the developing countries and Camdessus rose up against the dictates of the Group of Seven richest countries and rejected its plan for a selective increase in IMF quotas — the loan accounts which nations hold at the Fund. This rebellion, by one of the world's senior civil servants, left the Americans muttering about how he had gotten above his station and should consider his position.

Even the normally pugnacious Mr Camdessus appeared shaken and the widespread assumption was that he might not even be allowed to complete his second term. Then Mexico came galloping to the rescue.

While a lesser person might have panicked, Mr Camdessus showed admirable skill, together with the US Treasury, in marshalling the biggest rescue package ever mounted, raising some \$17 billion in a matter of weeks. Disaster on the global markets was averted, the Europeans complained about not being consulted and the Frenchman suddenly became the US pin-up.

It was Mr Camdessus's handling of the Mexican crisis and the subsequent reforms of the IMF which effectively gave him a lock on a third IMF term if he wanted it. There was no shortage of other candidates, including the Italian central banker (turned politician) Lamberto Dini and Britain's Sir Nigel Wicks. As well as securing a third term Mr Camdessus also has the comfort of knowing that, should a further emergency arise, the IMF will not immediately be short of resources.

Agreement has finally been reached on an expansion of the IMF's borrowing capacity to \$50 billion through the General Arrangements to Borrow, ending a discussion on the global economic architecture which has dragged on since the Mexican crisis.

Lloyd's yanked
MORE skulduggery at Lloyd's of London. Well, in the US actually, it seems that persons unknown have sent angry letters to some Californian Names falsely telling them that meetings set up by the Association of Lloyd's Members have been cancelled. The

implications, not just for Granada, of which the most significant is the way in which companies conduct themselves in its attitude to the Meridien Hotels chain. Yesterday, Granada chairman Gerry Robinson said the group would be hanging on to Meridien for the "immediate future", thus completing a volte-face on the group's stated position during the later stages of its £3.9 billion assault on Forte.

Meridien switch
GRANADA, normally one of Britain's more decisively managed blue-chip companies, is starting to look positively schizophrenic in its attitude to the Meridien Hotels chain.

The decision has several implications, not just for Granada, of which the most significant is the way in which companies conduct themselves in its attitude to the Meridien Hotels chain. Yesterday, Granada chairman Gerry Robinson said the group would be hanging on to Meridien for the "immediate future", thus completing a volte-face on the group's stated position during the later stages of its £3.9 billion assault on Forte.



Welsh fear losing out on investment as Forsyth plans Korea move

WILLIAM Hague, Welsh Secretary, probably had his eye on the more distant goal of Korea when he opened a new factory for Taiwan's Ringtel Electronics in Cwmbran, Gwent, yesterday, writes David Cowie.

His Cabinet colleague, Michael Forsyth, is in the Far East trying to win a £1 billion investment creating 4,000 jobs for Scotland. Two weeks ago BBC TV sent Welsh hopes soaring that the investment, by LG (ex-Lucky Goldstar), was definitely going to Newport, just down the road from Cwmbran. But its report turned out to be premature and Wales fears its hopes have gone north.

Mr Hague said: "Premature speculation never helped. Obviously, there are long and tricky negotiations and so it's best for people not to celebrate anything until we've actually done it... I think the best thing is for everybody to pipe down about it until, hopefully, at one point we will have something to say about it."

Clinton ire raised over Cuba trade

THE Clinton administration was last night refusing to back down after the leading industrial nations united to condemn America's unilateral trade sanctions against western companies that do business with Cuba.

IMF emergency loan boost widens circle of global finance leaders

THE leading industrial countries are today expected to give formal approval to a new \$50 billion emergency borrowing facility for the International Monetary Fund in a move which will also recognise changes in global economic power.

Watchdogs bite in Britain and US

Electricity firms fail to issue codes of practice that would assist customers on low incomes

350 jobs go as Liberty shuts branches in profits drive

LIBERTY, the upmarket retailer of fabrics and furnishings, is to shut all its branches in the UK at the cost of 350 jobs as part of a wide-ranging restructuring aimed at restoring profitability.

Washington made only a token effort to defuse the row as it became clear that some of America's strongest allies — including Britain and Canada — were prepared to retaliate against US firms and escalate the dispute into a full-scale trade war.

work in the near future," he said. Scottish Power has boasted that the merger with Manweb last year would improve service standards and efficiency. Northern Electric spent the early part of last year fending off a hostile bid from Trafalgar House.

Toys 'R' denies that embargo on discount Barbie dolls is ploy to keep prices high

TOURIST RATES — BANK BELLS

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli shekel)

Germany's biggest corporate loss brings accusations of deceit and incompetence ● New chief says he will restore group to glory

Shareholders aim barrage of abuse at Daimler elite

Ian Traynor in Bonn

DAIMLER-Benz, Germany's biggest industrial group, held its centenary annual meeting in Stuttgart yesterday amid unprecedented shareholder unrest over record losses, allegations of executive deceit and a battle with a former supervisory board member over plans to shed another aerospace subsidiary.

Jürgen Schrempf, the flamboyant Daimler chief, receiving a baptism of fire at his first agm as board chairman, told some 10,000 shareholders in Stuttgart: "There is no doubt that the months just elapsed are among the most dramatic in the more than 100 years' history of our firm." But he promised they would soon be proud of the company once again.

The board and supervisory board were treated to contemptuous accusations of failure by a reluctant small shareholders' group. Daimler shed the Dutch aircraft manufacturer Fokker, a chronic loss-maker whose acquisition Mr Schrempf masterminded.

It has also broken up and closed most of the AEG house-

hold appliances subsidiary and is seeking to sell the Dornier Air subsidiary to the US firm Fairchild.

Thirty motions critical of the Daimler elite were tabled yesterday. In addition to allegations of incompetence and abuse of position, there were complaints from environmentalist shareholders and those campaigning against military sales.

Mr Schrempf, who insists he is cutting Daimler down to size to return it to profitability and promote "shareholder value", said Mercedes, the car division, was achieving a return on capital far above the 12 per cent he set as a target.

He reiterated that profits were the priority, promising unspecified measures to improve them and "a positive result" for 1996.

"This company is once again on the way toward regaining the earnings strength that justified its outstanding reputation for many decades," Mr Schrempf said.

Daimler reported sales to April this year up 9 per cent at DM32.1 billion, with Mr Schrempf saying he expects 1996 turnover to be "clearly above" last year's DM31.4 billion.

Five weeks later, Mr Schrempf forecast losses of DM1.5 billion (\$660 million). The final losses were DM5.7 billion, the largest in German corporate history, and, for the first time in living memory, there was no dividend for shareholders.

As a result, disgruntled small shareholders filed suits against Mr Reuter, who was sacked last February, Mr Schrempf and Hilmar Kopper, head of Deutsche Bank, Germany's biggest commercial bank and Daimler's biggest shareholder and chairman of the Daimler supervisory board.

Mr Schrempf told shareholders that Mr Reuter's last annual report was based on a medium-range plan approved by both executive and supervisory boards.

Mr Reuter, he said, had referred to worries that arose in the weeks before the agm. "Unfortunately, these turned out to be justified" — so the accusations were untrue.

The past year has seen Daimler shed the Dutch aircraft manufacturer Fokker, a chronic loss-maker whose acquisition Mr Schrempf masterminded.

It has also broken up and closed most of the AEG house-



Not paying dividends... Jürgen Schrempf defends Daimler-Benz directors at a meeting of 10,000 shareholders in Stuttgart

Industry is going green but with reservations

Roger Cowe on how managers want tougher policing of laws

BRITISH business is turning greener as the Brent Spar oil rigiasco last year and new legislation have helped to push environmental issues up the corporate agenda.

As a result, many top executives are now going beyond legal compliance, despite worries about cost and poor understanding of business benefits from environmental initiatives. They are not worried about the rising tide of green laws, but do want tougher policing of regulations.

These are the main findings from a survey* of business environment trends, published yesterday, which suggests that an internal momentum has developed in many businesses that is sustaining developments despite the disappearance of the "green consumer".

"Seventy per cent of managers were more interested in environmental issues than a year ago. That is an astounding rate of increase," said Julie Hill of the Green Alliance, the lobbying group which was one of the sponsors of the survey. "This trend translates into companies trying better to understand societal values. It may enable compa-

Bass notes rumour but plays up heady brands

OUTLOOK/ Surprisingly strong results allow brewer to deflate pressure on beer deal, reports Pauline Springett

THE results were better than expected, the City was happy and the boss was keen to talk about the good bits... the hotels and the beer.

So it was a shame that chairman and chief executive Sir Ian "I cannot comment on market rumour" Prosser was so reluctant to discuss the progress of Bass's expected big deal — the purchase of Carlsberg Tetley from Allied Domecq.

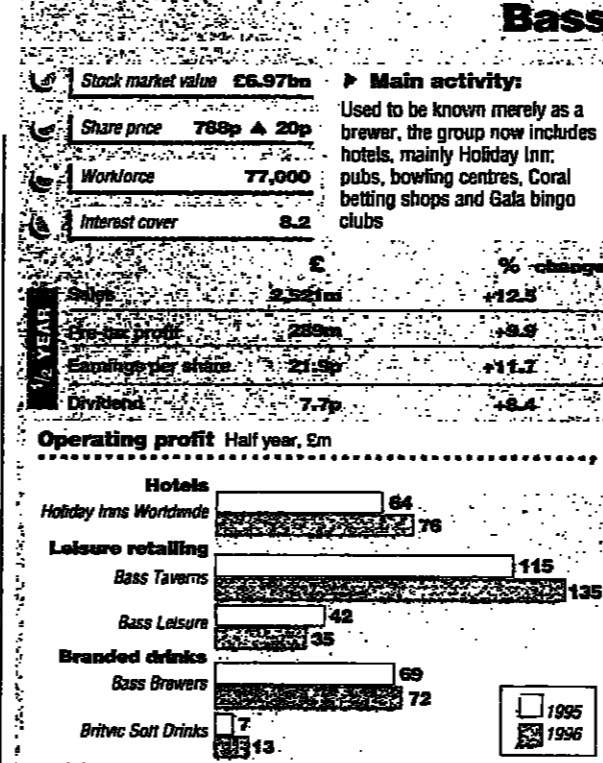
"I read the rumours with great interest and I understand why they exist," said Sir Ian. "We are, after all, financially very strong and will be spending £600 million on capital expenditure this year. Obviously we can buy things without a problem."

Brewing experts believed, said Sir Ian, that consolidation within the industry was inevitable if the average rate of return was to be increased. It was, he suggested, a logical extension of such thinking to believe that Bass was manoeuvring to snap up Carlsberg Tetley. But, he said, the real growth in profits for the brewer was in brand innovation.

Witness, he said, the huge success of Carlsberg's Irish Ale, which Bass launched in March 1994 and which was now the company's third most valuable brand.

Other Bass brand successes, added Sir Ian, included the premium lager Grolsch, whose sales grew by 44 per cent in the first half of the year, and the recently launched alcoholic lemonade. Sir Ian refused to be drawn on the controversial Hooper's Hooch.

Now also available in orange and blackcurrant fla-



vors, Hooper's Hooch is quaintly described in Bass's own brochure as "the UK's first and leading alcoholic carbonate, this refreshing fruit FAB (flavoured alcoholic beverage)".

It has, suggests the company, been "substitutional for beer to a considerable extent".

A cynic might interpret this as another hint that Hooch is not aimed at under-age teenage drinkers.

The upshot of this is that Bass is planning to launch more branded drinks.

But, as those who have been paying attention will have noticed, it does not mean that the Carlsberg Tetley acquisition is off Bass's agenda.

In fact the market had partly expected the purchase to be announced along with the half-year results. It is a deal, which appears to suit all parties. Allied Domecq, half owner of Carlsberg Tetley, the UK's third largest brewer, is believed to be keen to sell its stake.

Carlsberg is understood to have been considering exchanging its stake in the joint venture for a minority stake in Bass. The difficulty, it appears, lies not with the parties but with the Office of Fair Trading.

The combined market share of Bass and Carlsberg Tetley would be around 49 per cent. Consequently, it seems likely that the OFT may be pushing for Bass to dispose of some of its tied pubs, something Bass would probably refuse to accept without a fight.

If the insiders are to be believed, the negotiations have reached fever pitch. But Sir

News in brief

Ex-tycoon guilty of fraud conspiracy

FORMER property tycoon Simon Fussell and ex-stockbroker Rudi de Mendonca were yesterday found guilty of conspiracy to defraud a property group after being charged by the Serious Fraud Office in connection with an investigation into the now defunct Norton motorcycle maker. Mr de Mendonca was also found guilty of two charges of forgery.

Both men have been remanded on bail for sentencing at Southwark Crown Court on June 21. The case centred on the sale of a property called Exide House from property company Priest Mariani Holdings to furniture company Minty. Mr Fussell was a shareholder of both companies and also chairman of Minty.

The SFO said Mr Fussell had made a "secret and dishonest profit" from the sale of Exide House because it was sold to a fictitious person before being sold to Minty. In the interim, a lease was created at a premium of £650,000.

Director awaits IR move

GRAEME McCallum, one of the two directors of construction group Alfred McAlpine arrested last Thursday, said yesterday that he was hoping to hear details on possible charges he may face "as soon as possible".

Mr McCallum, along with non-executive McAlpine director Eric Grove, was speaking after the group's annual meeting in London.

During the meeting, outgoing chairman Sir John Milne refused to say anything about last week's events, reiterating that the arrests — which followed Inland Revenue inquiries — were related to "personal matters". He reported, however, that current trading was "in line with expectations", adding that margins remained under pressure.

William Hill write down

BRENT Walker, the crashed 80s conglomerate formerly run by George Walker, yesterday stunned the City by writing down the value of William Hill, its betting chain, by £280.7 million to £427.9 million. At the same time, Brent Walker said operating profits at William Hill had fallen by 25 per cent, to £51.3 million, mainly because of the National Lottery.

Brent Walker is also writing down the value of its Pubmaster pubs estate by £17.9 million, although profits improved at the chain from £13.3 million to £16.3 million. Overall, before interest payments were taken into account, Brent Walker made a pre-tax profit of £254.5 million against profits of £45.5 million the previous year. However, interest payments swelled this to £409.3 million, while the group's debts now stand at £1.5 billion. The shares closed down ¼p at 2½p.

Developer's spending peaks

LAND Securities, Britain's biggest property company, said yesterday that its spending on developments would peak this year.

Speaking as the company announced a slight fall in full-year pre-tax profits, from £244.7 million to £238.7 million, chairman Peter Hunt said the likely cost of the programme would be around £455 million.

Commenting on the results, Mr Hunt said the levels of rental growth the group had expected had "failed to materialise", adding that rental growth had generally been "patchy". However, he said there had been a more significant improvement in rents at retail warehouses, a sector in which Land Securities now has a portfolio worth over £517 million. Its shares fell 2p to 64½p on the statement.

Consumer contracts boost

THE Office of Fair Trading (OFT) has taken action against more than 280 companies for including unfair terms in consumer contracts. The OFT has received more than 700 complaints from consumers and trading standards officers about unfair terms since last July when new European regulations on consumer contracts came into force.

According to an OFT bulletin published yesterday, the most common unfair terms are "catch-all" clauses which are intended to exclude business from all liability from loss or damage even where caused by the companies' own negligence. In the majority of cases, the OFT has ordered companies to remove or amend the offending clauses.

Telecom jobs on the line

RON Sommer, chairman of Deutsche Telekom, Germany's soon-to-be-privatised telecom monopoly, provided grim news for employees yesterday when he said he expected to more than double operating profits to DM16.3 billion (£7 billion) by 2000. Industry sources believe such profits growth could only be achieved by savage reductions in the workforce. Mr Sommer told the German magazine Capital that he expected the group's stock market launch in November to be successful but that current profitability was not.

Undeterred, the company this week got Prince Michael of Kent to open a Moscow factory which can produce 8 million gallons a year. An executive explained: "Russian people eat ice cream throughout the year." So it wasn't snow on their boots, after all.

Nintendo's game comeback

NINTENDO profits rose for the first time in three years, with the strengthening dollar more than compensating for a fall in sales. Japan's top manufacturer of computer game players said that pre-tax profits for the parent company in the past financial year rose 19.8 per cent to 117.1 billion yen (£723 million). "Our profits got a lift from the dollar's rise," Hiroshi Imanishi, a managing director at Nintendo, said. "The dollar's ascent from about 90 yen last year to 106 yen this year inflated Nintendo's profits by 30.3 billion yen."

Volatile prices cause cash evaporation at Courtaulds

COURTAULDS, the chemicals group, is negotiating long-term contracts with leading suppliers in order to reduce the price volatility that resulted in a 19 per cent fall in 1995 profits, which were reported yesterday.

Sipko Huismans, retiring as chief executive, said the acrylic and viscose fibre business had "a very, very bad year" because of the volatility of raw-material prices as the chemical industry emerged from recession.

The price of acrylonitrile tripled before falling back to a level only slightly above where it started. Wood pulp, the raw material for viscose, rose in price from \$500 per tonne to \$1,200 before returning to \$600.

Mr Huismans said: "It is no way to run an industry for grown-ups." His designated successor, Gordon Campbell, said the company already had two agreements linking purchase prices to selling prices, and more were being discussed.

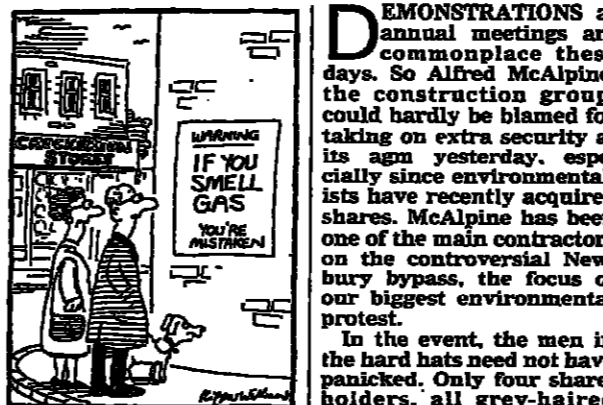
"It's good for the suppliers as well to avoid the kind of

Underside

Roger Cowe

IT'S TOUGH getting idiom right in foreign tongues. Hans Alders, a continental official from the UN Environment Programme, attempted to praise British business the other night by saying the country was shedding its image as "the dirty old man of Europe". Since he was talking about environmental matters, he probably meant "dirty man". But on the other hand, given Underside's recent experience of Human Resource executives (reported last week), perhaps not.

MARKS & Spencer's deputy chairman, Keith Oates, was unusually voluble at the annual results presentation. An air of less-than-usual reverence has crept into his attitude to the boss, perhaps since it became apparent that he may be deputy chairman for some time, following chairman Sir Richard Greenbury's reappointment for another five years. At one point Sir Richard observed: "My col-



ROBERT Dunkley, of computer services giant Hoskyns, warned yesterday that companies competing in the gas market were not investing enough in customer service. But some are investing too much. Kinetica, the joint venture between PowerGen and Conoco, has recently focused its marketing campaign on an obscure corner of south-west Wiltshire. Its mallshot promises gas supplies at 20 per cent less than British Gas, which sounds pretty good to the residents of Crockerston — a village which isn't connected to mains gas at all at present.

Handwritten signature or note in a box.

Cricket

Fresh start for new-look England

Mike Selvey on the much-changed team that begins a three-match one-day series against India today

ENGLAND'S four-year build-up to the new World Cup campaign begins at The Oval today with a shift in emphasis that many thought beyond those who manage English cricket.

The shake-up, before the dust has settled on the post-mortem file to England's disastrous World Cup, has been stimulated by a recent record in limited-overs internationals of only three wins in 13 matches played this year, and one in 11 against Test-playing opposition.

England's tardy preparation for the last World Cup was pathetic. A seven-match series against South Africa ought to have provided an opportunity to settle on a side and strategy for the coming few months.

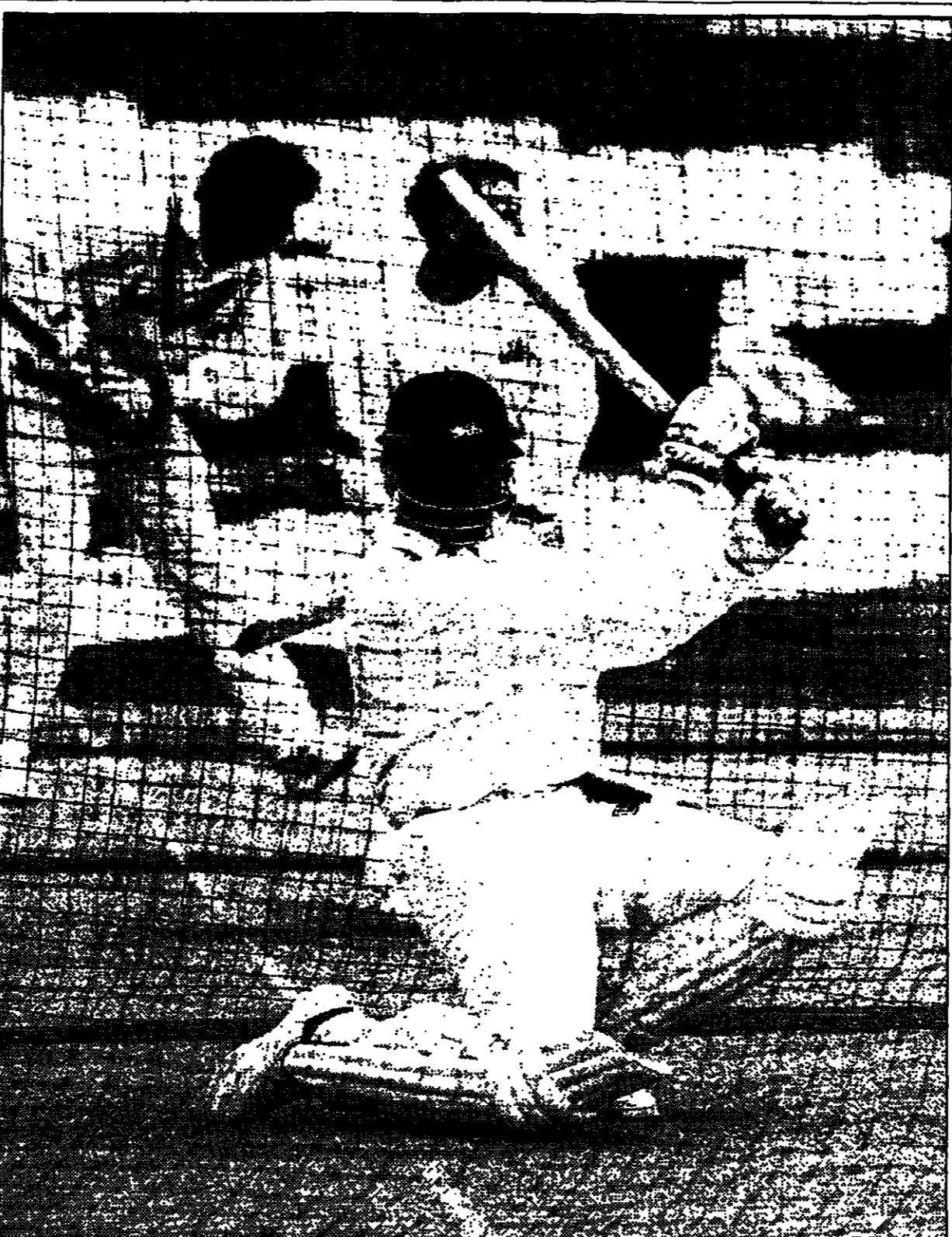
Suddenly, though, things have changed and in a big way. Where once the Texaco series was seen as a money-spinning pipe-opener to the summer's main Test event — something from which to gain the winning habit, but not a national disaster if it were lost — it has taken on the status of an event in its own right.

A shake-up in the selection process has led to a broader debate and as a result eight of the 16 who played a part in the World Cup campaign have been jettisoned.

Specialist batsmen or bowlers, as advocated by Imran Khan after Pakistan's triumph in the previous World Cup, are not enough now: instead specialist one-day players — not a derogatory term — who bowl to order and to a

field, but inventively, run like demons between the wickets, and field like there is no tomorrow are the order of the day. This England squad would have made a better fist of things on the subcontinent.

With the new regime, which includes a vibrant new coach in David Lloyd, comes the chance for new players — Ronnie Irani, Mark Ealham and Alistair Brown, all in their mid-twenties and therefore with a long-term interest to establish themselves and for a couple of fallen stars, Chris Lewis and Matthew Maynard, to re-establish themselves in the new order.



Another fine mesh... Maynard lets fly in the nets at a practice session at The Oval yesterday

showers — and The Oval pitch generally favouring pace, Mike Atherton might see little use for the spin of Neil Smith for any reason other than variety. That would point to Ealham, a tidy, intelligent bowler and biffing batsman, making his debut while Smith and Irani sit it out.

If England have some credibility to claw back, so too do India after the sorry World Cup semi-final in Calcutta when Mohammad Azharuddin won the toss, inserted Sri Lanka and paid a terrible price. That his house is still standing is a wonder; that he is still captain, a miracle.

There have been casualties, most notably Vinod Kambli (allegedly for nocturnal shenanigans during the tournament), but with Tendulkar, Azharuddin, Siddhu and Manjrekar the batting remains formidable and in form. Doubts, however, remain about the quality of their bowling, which with the exception of

Srinath and Kumble has much of the incisiveness of a Richard and Judy interview. India have a relatively settled side, though, and the only debate this morning will be which of Saurav Ganguly, an all-rounder, the spinner Sunil Joshi and pace bowler Paras Mhambrey plays. Paras in the springtime could be the answer.

Yawar Saeed, who played for Somerset in the mid-1950s, is to replace the sacked Intikhab Alam as manager of Pakistan's forthcoming tour to England.

ENGLAND front row: M. Ashworth (Lancashire, capt.), A. Brown (Sussex), G. Hogg (Northamptonshire), G. Thomas (Sussex), M. Maynard (Gloucestershire), R. Irani (Essex), A. Brown (Sussex), G. Hogg (Northamptonshire), G. Thomas (Sussex), M. Maynard (Gloucestershire), R. Irani (Essex).

Rugby Union

Clubs look for more sympathy at RFU summit

ENGLAND'S leading clubs will seize the opportunity to put the record straight on their competitive and financial demands for next season when they meet the full committee of the Rugby Football Union in London tomorrow.

Wheeler believes there is more sympathy within the RFU for the top clubs' special needs than Brittle's hard-line response has seemed to indicate in recent months. Bill Bishop, the RFU president, who has called tomorrow's emergency meeting, is thought to favour some form of positive discrimination in favour of Epruc members in the distribution of income from television. Exactly how many members of the full committee support Bishop's more flexible stance remains to be seen.

In fact, the clubs have significantly toned down their original list of demands which the RFU only a consultative or watchdog role in the administration of the clubs' affairs.

Epruc are now prepared to accommodate Twickenham's revised format for the Divisional Championship in November and December; they will also take part in the RFU's condensed version of the European Cup instead of insisting on a schedule of matches at regular intervals throughout the season.

The England No. 8 Dean Richards has been re-elected as captain of the Leicester Tigers for next season. Richards, who has led Leicester in 30 matches, finished ahead of the Eastland wing Rory Underwood.

Andy Clarke, the fitness adviser with the Courage league side Sale and the rugby league club Halifax, has joined Ireland's management team with the responsibility of developing a fitness programme.

Each club has in its squad around 20 to 30 young men who at the moment have no firm basis on which to plan their future careers.

Wales were last in the dark days of 1961, they humiliated themselves on the field and disgraced themselves off it. As they have been constantly reminded in the weeks leading up to today's departure for an eight-match tour, they lost to New South Wales 71-8 and were then defeated 63-6 by Australia.

Their hosts' surprise turned to shock at the banquet after the international when a group of Wales players started bawling. "Wofull Wales sallop each other," screamed a headline in the Sydney Morning Herald, which questioned why the tourists had not shown as much fight on the field.

Wales' results have not improved significantly since then — their victory against France in March ended a record run of eight consecutive championship defeats — but they have an optimism and self-confidence not detected since 1988, when they last won the Triple Crown.

Wales have toured New Zealand and Australia only twice before and their Test record stands at eight defeats out of eight.

Wales beginning longest of hauls

David Plummer on a tour to restore tattered reputations

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Tennis

Becker out of French Open

BORIS BECKER has pulled out of next week's French Open because of a thigh injury.

The 28-year-old Australian Open champion tore a muscle on the inside of his right thigh in two places during his defeat by Switzerland's Marc Rosset in his opening World Team Cup match on Monday and had to pull out of yesterday's singles against Sergi Bruguera. David Prinosil was named as his replacement in Germany's round-robin group match against Spain.

"I am extremely disappointed," said Becker, the three-times Wimbledon champion who has never won a clay-court tournament. "The last six weeks' preparation on clay have been for nothing. Hopefully I will be back for the grass-court season."

Monica Seles, playing on a European court for the first time since a spectacular night in Hamburg three years ago, survived five match points to defeat the Austrian Barbara Schett 3-6, 7-6, 6-2 at the Spanish Open in Madrid yesterday. Seles had not played since early February because of a shoulder injury.

Cricket News and Scores 0891 22 88+ 1 Day International Live Commentary 28 Match Reports 29 Derbyshire 01 Middlesex 40 Durham 32 Northamptonshire 41 Essex 28 Nottingham 42 Gloucestershire 34 Somerset 43 Gloucestershire 36 Surrey 44 Hampshire 36 Sussex 45 Kent 37 Warwickshire 46 Lancashire 38 Worcestershire 47 Leicestershire 39 Yorkshire 48 Complete county scores 0891 22 88 30

Hockey

British Olympic coach resigns

DAVID WHITAKER has resigned as Great Britain coach less than two months before the start of the Atlanta Olympics. The official reason is that his business has grown enormously and he feels unable to give the coaching the attention it requires.

He says his decision has been made possible by the successful way the manager David Whittle and the supporting coaches, John Copp (Reading) and James Duthie (Surrey), have developed.

Richard Dodds, chairman of the GB Men's Olympic Hockey Committee, said: "Whittle now becomes the top man, Copp will be chief coach and Duthie team coach."

Speaking at Bisham, where the team are training, he said Whitaker wanted to resign after the team qualified at Barcelona in January but he was persuaded to stay on.

Whittle, 47, who became an OBE after coaching Britain's gold medal winners in 1988 and was under contract as a part-time coach until after these Games, has been unable to give a wholehearted commitment to the team. Besides his management consultancy he has a complicated personal life, having recently left his wife and moved in with Sue Slocombe.

Rugby League

Laughton accepts 'real world' as Spruce joins Bradford Bulls

STUART SPRUCE, the 25-year-old Widnes full-back, yesterday joined Bradford Bulls in a deal valued at £140,000. The Bulls have paid £120,000 in cash for Spruce and let the hooker Tommy Hodgkinson go to Naughton Park as part of the package.

Hodgkinson joined Bradford for £20,000 from St Helens a year ago. Spruce should prove a valuable acquisition for Bradford and his capture underscores the Bulls' rising stature and their determination to challenge Wigan and St Helens as a leading Super League club.

Doug Laughton probably exaggerated slightly yesterday when he said that this transfer was the first time he had sold a top player. But his disappointment at losing such a brave, quick full-back was palpable.

Widnes's former Leeds coach was always happiest in a buyers' market and he has made some outstanding signings over the years, notably

from rugby union which he raided with impeccable judgement. "But we live in the real world," said Laughton, "and I can understand Stuart's position. We also have excellent back-up in Gary Broadbent and will be bringing a big-name player to the club for next season."

Quinnell fit to face Bath

Wigan's scrum-half is doubtful, however, and an unusual half-back pairing is likely in the youthful Craig Murdoch and the veteran Joe Lydon, who has not been in the first team since November 1994.

Lydon has been playing regularly for Wigan rugby union club's veterans. "My Zimmer frame has been polished and we are ready to go," he said.

Wigan will announce their side today or tomorrow and a surprise move may see Va'iga Tuigamala in the pack.

Brian Campsall, who will referee the match under union rules, is worried about lengthy scrums. "I am concerned about the safety angle and hope that Wigan necks will not be under stress," he said. "The idea of the game is not to hold the scrums up for ever."

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Faldo becomes a laughing cavalier

David Davies

A NEW relaxed and laughing Nick Faldo launched himself at the remainder of the 1996 season yesterday. After winning a shoot-out during the preliminaries for the Volvo PGA Championship at Wentworth, the US Masters champion said: "This is the new me. It has dawned on me that my record gives me this nice freedom to be more relaxed about my golf and also to have a more aggressive spirit."

"Since winning the Masters I can have a free run at the rest of the season. I can put my record on the wall and no one can take it away from me." That record features three major championships this year after "two years when I wasn't even close."

Faldo went on, after the Canon-sponsored shoot-out: "It's worrying when you are not winning. Since Augusta it's been a much nicer feeling than wondering what's still in you. Winning just makes me want to work harder."

To encourage an aggressive attitude Faldo has worked out a routine for practice rounds with Fanny Sunesson, his caddy of six years. He has to pay her if he only pars a hole but she pays out for eagles and

Sacked caddie sues Ballesteros

SPAIN'S Severiano Ballesteros is being sued for £14,000 by his former caddy Joey Jones. The Ryder Cup captain was sacked with a writ for breach of contract during a practice session at the Benson and Hedges International in Oxfordshire.

Jones claims Ballesteros had promised him at least a year's work but he was released after only five weeks, during which time the Spaniard collected £91,000 for winning last summer's Spanish Open. The former shipping

Sailing

Baird joins New York pact

ED BAIRD, the world champion and world No. 1 match-racing skipper, has joined the New York Yacht Club's attempt to return the America's Cup to the United States.

Pact 2000, the technical team that was responsible for Young America in 1995 and has been selected by the NYCC, made the announcement yesterday

Thursday May 23 1996
ire group to glory
son guilty of conspiracy
awaits IR ma
Mill write down
per's spending
mer contracts

Racing

Dr Massini gets Derby call again

Chris Hawkins

DR MASSINI, who looked doubtful for next month's Vodafone Derby after...

Alex were not unexpected absentees from the 34 still standing their ground...

same sire, Machiavellian, as Tuesday's Predominate winner Don Michelotto...

Poetry had the motion to make light of the deteriorating going to win the opening...

"The 2,000 form looks the best to me and I can understand some of these horses who are little more than maiden winners...

"I'm delighted with Even Top's progress since the Guineas he worked in over a mile the other day and I might send him a mile and a furlong on the round gallop...

Even Top looks much more likely to finish a mile and a half than Mark Of Estem and should really come into his own over middle-distances...

Topanora, his sire, won over a mile and a half while his dam was successful over a mile and three-quarters...

Stereo sounds a longshot

WHAT price a Serbian-trained runner in the Vodafone Derby. Well, a somewhat conservative 66-1 is available with Hill's about the mystery horse in this year's...

Mr M Ivanovic and exported to the former Yugoslavia. Although the fee due for the latest acceptance stage has not yet been paid...

Even Top looks much more likely to finish a mile and a half than Mark Of Estem and should really come into his own over middle-distances...

Topanora, his sire, won over a mile and a half while his dam was successful over a mile and three-quarters...

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Goodwood with guide to the form

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 2.10 Matalia Bay, 2.40 Opus Rebuff).

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 2.10 ROYAL SCOTTS REGIMENT FILLES STAKES SYD 61 £4,740).

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 2.10 FULLMAN FOODS HANDICAP 1m 41 £7,000).

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 2.40 KIDSONS BEY TROPHY HANDICAP 71 £2,000).

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 3.10 PERIAL STAKES 1m 21 £1,570).

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 3.40 JAMAR LOGISTICS AND AIR FREIGHT BILLING HURDLE 1m 41 £1,800).

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 3.45 SIMPKINS EDWARDS HANDICAP HURDLE 1m 41 £1,000).

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 3.50 BROWN & SHIPLEY HURDLE CHASE 1m 41 £1,000).

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 4.00 BUNHAMBAIR HURDLE CHASE 1m 41 £1,000).

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 4.00 MACALLAN HURDLE CHASE 1m 41 £1,000).

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 4.00 BROWN & SHIPLEY HURDLE CHASE 1m 41 £1,000).

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 4.00 BROWN & SHIPLEY HURDLE CHASE 1m 41 £1,000).

Uttoxeter National Hunt card tonight

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 6.30 Daring Hen, 7.00 STONETRACKER (non)).

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 8.00 BLACK BOTTLE CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS' BELTING HURDLE 1m 41 £1,000).

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 8.00 BROWN & SHIPLEY HURDLE CHASE 1m 41 £1,000).

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 8.00 BROWN & SHIPLEY HURDLE CHASE 1m 41 £1,000).

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 7.30 FAMOUS GROUSE HURDLE CHASE (for the Fred Goodall Memorial Trophy) 1m 41 £1,000).

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 8.00 BROWN & SHIPLEY HURDLE CHASE 1m 41 £1,000).

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Fast forward... the blinkered Montserrat sticks his head out to win the sprint handicap at Goodwood yesterday

Detteri to bounce back with Sharp Rebuff

FRANKIE Detteri returns to action with five rides at Goodwood today after serving a 10-day ban and it should not be long before he is back among the winners...

White in the Festival Stakes now that his original ride, Midnight Legend, has been pulled out owing to the change in the going...

Maringala (3.40), only ninth in that race, has something to find with Lear White. But he is better judged on last season's form, which included a close third to Luso in the Chester Vase...

Rocky Oasis (4.45), who has several fancy entries to his name, such as the St James's Palace Stakes and the Eclipse, must have done well since his only outing last year...

Over the jumps at Uttoxeter, Stormtracker (7.00) looks a good bet to continue trainer Colin Weedon's fine recent run of form.

Newcastle runners and riders

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 2.25 TWENTYMOUTH HURDLE STAKES SYD 1m 41 £3,720).

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 3.55 CHAMBLINGTON CONDITIONS STAKES SYD 61 £2,000).

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 4.25 BUCKER CASH & CARRY HANDICAP SYD 1m 41 £2,100).

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 5.00 SEATON BURN HANDICAP 61 £4,000).

Exeter National Hunt evening programme

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 6.15 Peter Mowbray, 7.45 Tour Leader).

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 8.00 BROWN & SHIPLEY HURDLE CHASE 1m 41 £1,000).

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 6.45 SIMPKINS EDWARDS HANDICAP CHASE 1m 41 £1,000).

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Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 8.15 JAMAR LOGISTICS AND AIR FREIGHT BILLING HURDLE 1m 41 £1,800).

Results

Table with 2 columns: Race name and results (e.g., GOODWOOD 3.10 (7/1) PONTREY, P. Robinson (12-1), 2.50 (10-1)...

Advertisement for RACELINE featuring phone number 0930 1684 and a list of horse racing results for Goodwood, Uttoxeter, and Worcester.

Soccer

Birmingham scoop United's Bruce

STEVE BRUCE, the Manchester United captain, has been lured away from Old Trafford by Birmingham City in a deal that will make the stalwart central defender one of the highest-paid players in English football.

The 35-year-old Bruce's decision to join Trevor Francis, who took charge of the ambitious First Division club this month after the dismissal of Barry Fry, came in a surprise announcement.

"Francis said: 'It all started when someone told me that he [Bruce] had a clause in his contract that allowed him to go on a free transfer. It's gone from there in the last two or three days.'

"We're a young team, we need a captain and a leader and there's nobody better than Steve. It was too good an opportunity to miss because he is still an outstanding footballer in my opinion he's the best player who hasn't been capped. His value to me is immense."

Although Bruce will join Birmingham as a player, it is thought he will spend much of his time nurturing the talent of his new club's youngsters over the next two seasons.

"It will be a terrible wrench leaving Manchester United because I have some wonderful memories of both the club and its supporters," he said. "But at this stage of my career the offer from Trevor Francis is too good to turn down. I am really looking forward to the challenge of getting Birmingham City into the Premiership."



United... much-honoured Bruce and his admirer Francis

model of consistency at the heart of the defence as United emerged from a lengthy period of transition to win a succession of honours, culminating in the double Double achieved this season.

Ferguson. "That is the very least we owe him. It gives him the chance to extend his career and it is a marvellous challenge for him; we cannot stand in his way. He has served the club magnificently for almost 10 years and we wish him well in the future."

Venables toys with Chinese puzzler

David Lacey in Beijing

IF TWO of a kind can see off a full house in the Workers' Stadium here this evening, England's last full international before the European Championship may yet be remembered for something other than the bizarre fact that it is being played at all.

By selecting Manchester United's Gary and Philip Neville for the friendly against China, Terry Venables has already ensured a certain curiosity value for the fixture. Not since Jack and Bobby Charlton appeared together for the last time against Czechoslovakia in Guadalajara in the 1970 World Cup have two brothers played in an England team.

Yet this will not be an England team in the truest sense of the word. To be sure, China

will be facing a team of England players, the 19-year-old Philip Neville being the only new cap, but the side that Venables will field against Switzerland in the opening Euro 96 match a fortnight on Saturday will bear only a passing resemblance to this.

Diplomatic protocol having declared the pitch in the Workers' Stadium to be the next best thing to a croquet field, which everybody knows it is not, no one was going to admit that Venables has left out certain players to protect them from injury, which most suspect he has.

So it should, therefore, be possible to gauge the importance of David Seaman, Paul Ince, Teddy Sheringham and Stuart Pearce to England's European Championship prospects by the amount of time, if any, Venables is prepared to allow them against China.

Alan Shearer is the obvious exception because, having made only a brief appearance against Hungary on Saturday after his hernia operation, he needs matches. He also needs international goals.

Only two of those who began the Hungary match, Gary Neville and Darren Anderton, will start tonight's game and of the 11 who faced Croatia in the previous fixture only Gary Neville, Paul Gascoigne and Steve McClaren start here.

Clearly Venables is using the China match to tie up loose ends before naming his squad of 22 for the European Championship. Two of the impossibles are Nick Harvey and Jamie Redknapp, each given a late chance to state his case for surviving the cut.

"They both played against Colombia last September," Venables recalled, "and Redknapp at that time was outstanding. He looked like he was right in there. Then he had this unfortunate injury and was out for quite a long time, but now he's beginning to get his form back."

"Harvey had a very hard season. He started off very well and he's stuck in there. I've spoken to Bryan Robson [Middlebrough's manager] at length about him and he felt that in the last few matches he had been doing better. He's certainly looked very sharp since he's been with us."

The match also represents a crucial fitness test for Tony Adams, who has not played in a competitive game since undergoing a knee operation in mid-January. Having lost Mark Wright to damaged knee ligaments last Saturday, Venables needs to see whether Adams shapes up as well in a game as he has been doing in training.

"I asked him how he felt before we trained this morning," said Venables, "and he said he felt good. And he looked fine to me." Fitness apart, Adams also needs to demonstrate to the England coach that he is happy playing in the three-man defence Venables has adopted in the Arsenal man's absence.

With Ince rested, Gareth Southgate has a further chance to demonstrate the versatility which, since Venables opted for playing three at the back, has become a prime virtue in this squad. To some extent the pattern of the game will decide whether Southgate is a straight swap for Ince or more of a centre-back support for Adams, whose experience in this sort of system is limited.

It is to be hoped that Gascoigne's regular misfortune with injuries does not resurface now. His decision not to join the rest of the squad on yesterday's excursion to the Great Wall suggested his luck was still in. Because of a cable-car failure the players had to reach the wall on foot, a 45-minute slog in soaring temperatures.

Qi Wusheng, China's coach, will announce his side shortly before the kick-off. "This is a great opportunity to test our team's ability," he said. England's too, if recent results in Beijing are anything to go by.

ENGLAND: Flowers (Blackburn); Neville (Manchester Utd); Adams (Sheff Wed); McClaren (QPR); Anderton (Tottenham); Gascoigne (Rangers); Southgate (Aston Villa); Redknapp (Liverpool); Barry (Middlesbrough); McClaren (Liverpool); Shearer (Blackburn).

GERMANY have settled a dispute over expenses with the Vauxhall Conference club Macclesfield and will train at the non-League club's ground during Euro 96.

The Silkmen feared that they might be out of pocket after accommodating the Germans, but now Euro 96 officials and the German soccer federation have agreed to donate £2,000 each to the FA Trophy holders and share the cost of stewarding.

Ramonn Bannon, the former Hearts, Dundee United and Scotland midfielder, has been appointed manager of Falkirk.

Sunderland have released the midfielders Gordon Armstrong and Brian Atkinson and the full-back John Kay.



Diplomatic discussions... England's coach Terry Venables, right, confers with Ted Buxton, his assistant, and Paul Gascoigne during the Beijing build-up



United for England... the Nevilles, Gary and Philip

Brothers and backs for England

David Lacey on the Nevilles who line up in illustrious succession to the Charltons

GARY and Philip Neville will be the 20th set of brothers to play for England but only the sixth to have appeared in the national team simultaneously.

Before Jack and Bobby Charlton there were the Formans, Frank and Fred, Arthur and Percy Walters, Hubert and Frank Heron and the Rawsons, Bert and Bill. The Herons even played together for the FA Cup with Wanderers in 1876, but since the Nevilles

over-familiar with this way of playing; nor is Adams if it comes to that. Not that the younger Neville had any qualms about what might happen in the Workers' Stadium tonight. "I think I'll find it easy to adapt to a three-man defence," he said. "Both Terry and Don Howe have been asking me if I understand how it works and I've always said yes."

The last time the Nevilles played together in a team other than Manchester United was for Boundary Park Under-16s. David Platt and Trevor Sinclair also graduated from this Manchester club. The brother's father, Neville Neville, is commercial manager at Bury.

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United given Euro seeding next season

MANCHESTER United have been seeded for next season's European Champions' League but Rangers, the Scottish title-holders, will have to qualify.

Ajax will also be among the eight seeds who qualify directly for the last 16 but Juventus, who lost their Serie A crown to AC Milan, went into last night's European Cup final against the Dutch side knowing that if they lost they would be in the UEFA Cup next season.

Joining United and Ajax will be AC Milan, Borussia Dortmund, Porto, either Atletico Madrid or Valencia, and Club Brugge or Juventus as direct qualifiers.

Games on August 7 and 21 will decide if Rangers reach the Champions League group, which guarantees a further six ties, but Paul Gascoigne is suspended for the first two European matches next season because he was ordered off against Borussia Dortmund in Germany last December.

Results

SOCCER PROFESSIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP (Semi-finals): Sunderland 2-1 Bolton Wanderers; Charlton Athletic 2-1 Reading. (Final): Sunderland 2-1 Charlton Athletic. (Semi-finals): Reading 2-1 Bolton Wanderers; Charlton Athletic 2-1 Sunderland. (Final): Reading 2-1 Charlton Athletic.

Baseball

AMERICAN LEAGUE: Seattle 13, Boston 7; Cleveland 6, Milwaukee 5; Kansas City 7, Detroit 1; California 5, Baltimore 2; New York 7, Oakland 3; Chicago 2, Toronto 1. NATIONAL LEAGUE: San Francisco 6, Montreal 5; Florida 3, Cincinnati 2; Colorado 12, Pittsburgh 10; Los Angeles 6, New York 5; St Louis 4, San Diego 4.

Baseball

SECOND IN CHAMPIONSHIP (Final day of group matches): Korea 255-206 (14 4); Sri Lanka 211-100 (10 4); India 188-100 (10 4); Pakistan 150-100 (10 4); Zimbabwe 100-100 (10 4); Bangladesh 100-100 (10 4); Sri Lanka 211-100 (10 4); India 188-100 (10 4); Pakistan 150-100 (10 4); Zimbabwe 100-100 (10 4); Bangladesh 100-100 (10 4).

Scotland hope to hoodwink their Euro 96 audience

Patrick Glenn in Connecticut on the options left open to Craig Brown and Co

THE world's two largest oceans are not vast enough to keep modern football teams from the prying eyes of forthcoming opponents.

Scotland's manager Craig Brown, having taken his squad across the Atlantic to the eastern seaboard of the United States, yesterday confirmed that he would have "contacts" on the other side of the Pacific checking England's matches in China and Hong Kong.

Ice Hockey

USA: Stanley Cup Western Conference play-off: Colorado 2, Detroit 0 (OT). (Colorado lead series 2-0). NHL: Colorado 2, Detroit 0 (OT). (Colorado lead series 2-0). NHL: Colorado 2, Detroit 0 (OT). (Colorado lead series 2-0).

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SportsGuardian

EUROPEAN CUP FINAL

Ajax 1, Juventus 1 (after 90 minutes)

Litmanen checks Juventus

Martin Thorpe in Rome

A GLARING miss by Gianluca Vialli in the last five minutes, after he had rounded the Ajax goalkeeper, denied Juventus the chance to lift the European Cup after 90 minutes and forced the game into extra-time last night. Rangers and Chelsea may reconsider their interest in the Italian international.

During the day the Italian fans had been conspicuous by their silence, keeping a low profile in a city where they are hated, mainly by Roma supporters but also by Lazio's. Once inside the ground, however, they soon let loose, spreading large banners behind the goal, equally large grand-prix starting flags and the ubiquitous red flares.

The thousands of Ajax fans who had crammed into Rome earlier in the day had been conspicuous by their noise. A large contingent chanted and waved flags inside the Colosseum, eager for the moment when they would discover if Juventus were going to play the part of the Christians in the city's other main stadium hours later. They were not.

Juventus began with a religious passion all right but were eager to chase Ajax, hoping to catch them cold in the opening quarter of the game. It worked wonderfully.

Perhaps the Dutch were missing the reassuring presence of the suspended Reiziger at the back, for the uncertainty there was palpable. In the eighth minute Van der Sar failed to hold a 25-yard shot from Torricelli, allowing the fumble to fall to the feet of Ravanelli, who wastefully blasted the chance into the flower bed behind the goal.

Four minutes later the goalkeeper booted again, only this time it was costly. He came out for a ball that Frank de Boer was shepherding back for him, missed the kick



Head case... Fabrizio Ravanelli, of Juventus, celebrates his opening goal in Rome last night

and Ravanelli pounced down the right to slide the ball into the net from an acute angle. Juventus continued to threaten and Van der Sar redeemed himself somewhat by tipping Deschamps's shot

round a post. Ajax's only authentic chance had come from a shot by Musampa, which was saved by Peruzzi. But Juventus's goalkeeper saved his worst for last to let the Dutch back into the game five

minutes before half-time. Frank de Boer's curling 20-yard free-kick came straight into the chest of the Italian goalkeeper but for some reason he decided to punch the ball away instead of catch-

ing it. Litmanen, the tournament's leading scorer, fought off Vierchow and slotted home the rebound to put Ajax level.

Ajax's answer to the lack of pressure on Peruzzi's goal was to bring on their troubled young striker Kluyvert for the start of the second half. Ajax's main problem, however, had been creation.

Juventus had done well in holding to their plan of keeping a tight rein on any Dutch flamboyance, denying Ajax the time on the ball to start a meaningful passing movement. When Ajax did escape the manacles they were soon hit by the scythe.

When the mobile Davids cut in from the left with a feint and a shimmy, Yovic's boot brutally diverted the midfielder vertically. Moments later Bogarde was going about his business when Ravanelli came sliding in with a late challenge.

Chances were few as the second half unfolded, neither side wanting to make more mistakes by being too adventurous. The best chance fell to Juventus: Ravanelli this time beat Bogarde with the ball, cutting inside the defender to the right-hand byline and crossing the ball back to Vialli. However, the supposedly British-bound striker would not have impressed many by mis hitting his close-range shot straight at the goalkeeper.

With 15 minutes left Peruzzi once again had the Juventus supporters' hearts in their mouths when he elected to punch away a shot from Del Piero instead of catching it.

Juventus: Peruzzi, Torricelli, Ferrara, Vierchow, Pessotto, Corò, Augustin, Amini, Sousa, Deschamps, Vialli, Del Piero, Ravanelli. Ajax: Van der Sar, Sibov, F de Boer (Scholten, 88), Bogarde, Bittor, H de Boer, Litmanen, Davids, George, Kano, Musampa. Referee: M Diaz Vega (Spain).

Never mind the quality, look at the ad



Ian Katz

THE US Presidential race is hotting up, but the slickest campaign of the moment does not promote Bill Clinton or Bob Dole. Instead it urges Americans to vote for Ken Griffey Jr, the square-jawed Seattle Mariners slugger.

The "Griffey for President" campaign is being mounted by Nike, in the hope, presumably, that his supporters will invest in new footwear to get to the ballot box. On the face of it, it is a tribute to the Seattle player's enormous popularity; he is, after all, drop-dead gorgeous, relentlessly charming and beyond question one of the finest hitters in the league.

In truth, however, the Griffey campaign is more a testament to the power of the big corporate sponsors in US sport than it is to Griffey's considerable talents. Nike, quite simply, has decided to turn the centre-fielder into baseball's No. 1 star.

Never mind that Griffey has never won a league MVP award while some active players have collected as many as three, never mind that his performance with the bat this season has reeked of mediocrity. Nike has decided that he has the right stuff and it will see to the rest.

Nike can make a giant out of Griffey, provided he doesn't do anything too appalling, because US stars are made on the screen, not the field. As Greg Maddux, arguably the finest left-hander of all time, would attest, it's not enough to be a great pitcher, you must be a great pitch man too.

Sure Shaquille O'Neal, the NBA leviathan, was spectacular in Orlando's play-off series against the Atlanta Hawks, but what most Americans remember is that ad where Shaq ran through several TV screens to get a can of Pepsi.

Of course his team-mate Arfernee "Penny" Hardaway emerged as a fully fledged star on the court this year, but his fame was easily eclipsed by that of "Little Penny", the garulous Hardaway puppet created to sell Reebok trainers.

The highlight of Deion "Prime Time" Sanders's first season with the champion Dallas Cowboys? Why, that Pizza Hut ad with the Dallas owner Jerry Jones of course.

Youthful Detroit Pistons star Grant Hill? That would be Sprite. The great Charles Barkley? Not much of a season but there was that fun deodorant commercial.

For the corporate star-makers, an athlete's ability to score points or smash home runs may be secondary to other, less easily quantifiable qualities such as charm, wholesomeness and eloquence. Shaq may have the most imposing dunk in the NBA but his colossal celebrity — and \$17 million in endorsement fees last year — may have more to do with his facility for playing the gentle giant.

For most of this decade Michael Jordan effectively unified the titles of marketing and sporting superhero by dominating basketball games as thoroughly as he dominated the commercial breaks between them. The fourth league MVP award he accepted on Tuesday night matched with pleasing symmetry a fourth year as the world's top-paid athlete, with \$40 million in endorsements topping up his meagre \$3.9 million salary.

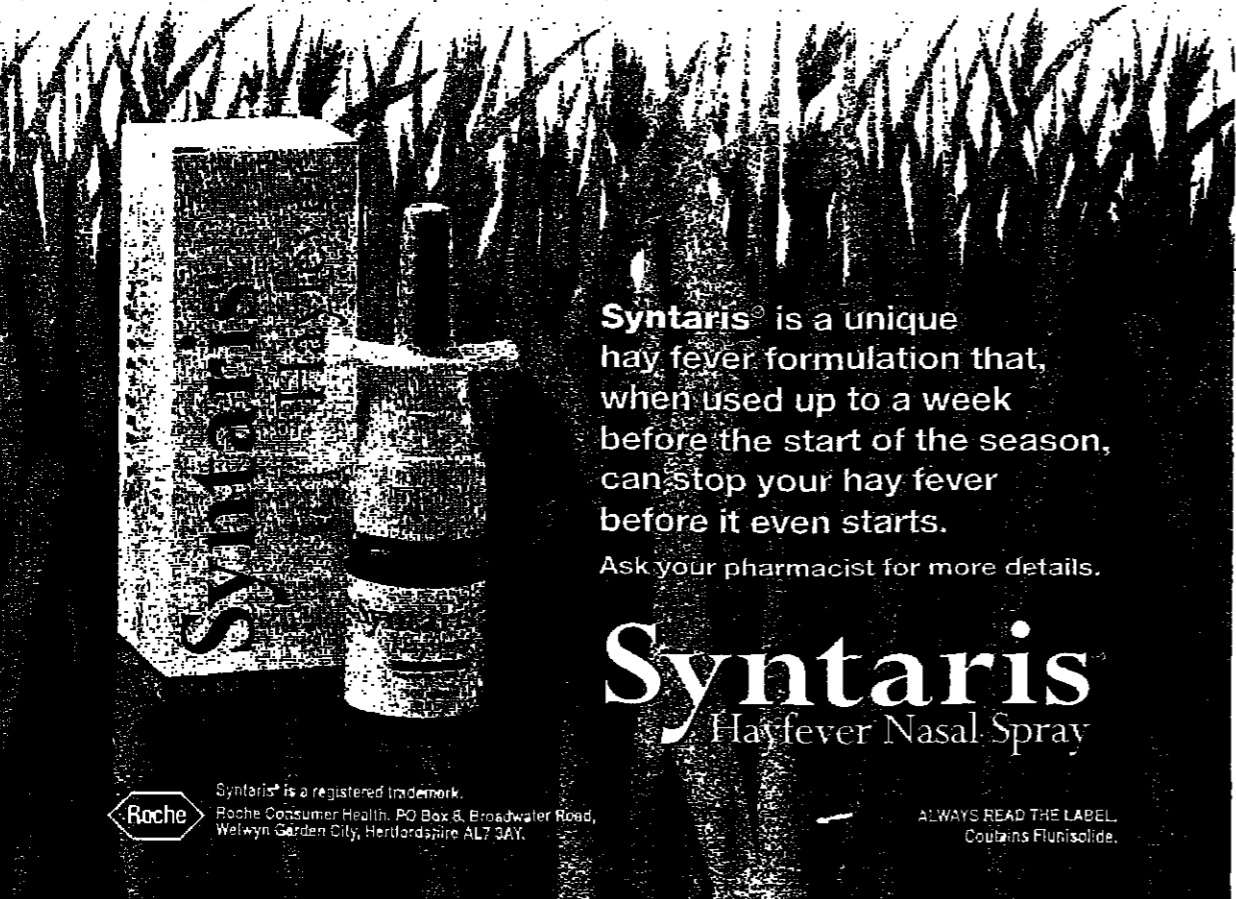
BYOND His Airness, however, the correlation between sponsorship and athletic ability is less satisfying. Take Hill, the Detroit forward who in January topped the NBA's All-Star ballot for the second year in a row. He is a gifted, explosive athlete but does any fan honestly believe he is a greater player than Jordan? Of course not.

The articulate and eminent presenter Hill was simply appointed as the NBA's new megastar by the corporate sponsors when Jordan threw them into a tizzy by resigning from basketball. It's too late, now, for them to admit that the affable youngster may not be the giant they promised.

As striking, though, may be the omission from the marketing hall of fame. Last year Houston's Halkeem "The Dream" Olajuwon ruled on the court but was virtually invisible off it. This year the Seattle duo of Gary Payton and Shawn Kemp have dominated the Western Conference play-offs but barely left the bench in the real world.

Payton and Kemp are abrasive, unattractive characters who might understandably frighten corporate suitors, but Olajuwon's absence from the sponsorship big league invites an uglier explanation. The Nigerian-born behemoth still speaks with an African accent and talks roughly and patronisingly about his Muslim faith. Not really the right stuff, if you get my drift. I mean, "Olajuwon for President"? It would never fly.

STOP HAY FEVER BEFORE IT STARTS



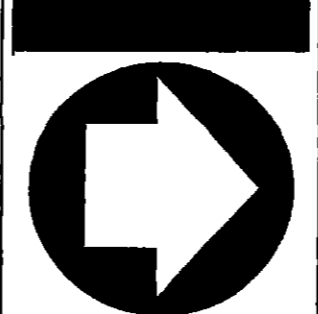
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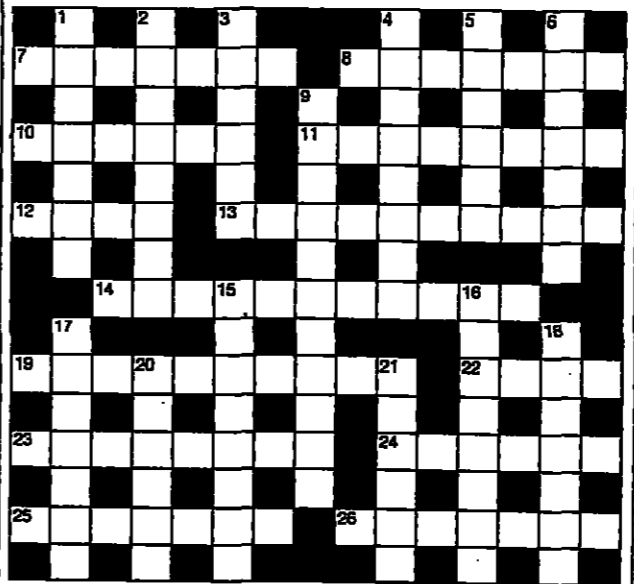


Secrets and Lies proves that a film can have a big heart and a harsh edge, and that the British suburban landscape at its most mundane is a fascinating terrain that our cinema has hardly begun to explore. Jonathan Romney

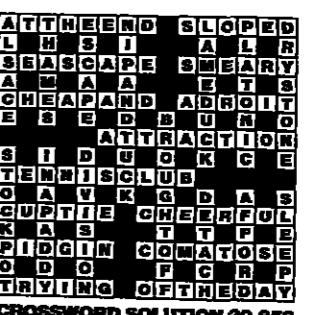
G2 p8

Guardian Crossword No 20,660

Set by Rufus



- Across**
- 7 Wiped the floor with woollen fabric (7)
 - 8 Junior officers made to climb the mast (7)
 - 10 Wine produced by Irish county town's capital (8)
 - 11 Neglect nothing on a job (8)
 - 12 Some passer-by from Belgrade? (4)
 - 13 Reckoned it's deliberate (10)
 - 14 He said belts need to be adjusted and secured (11)
 - 19 Hornespun gin? (7,3)
 - 22 Made processed cheese (4)
 - 23 Wrongly throws into an unsuitable role? (8)
 - 24 This poet makes uninteresting study (8)
 - 25 Shown up by a space traveller? (7)
- Down**
- 1 His job is to cast waste away (7)
 - 2 Assigns to a berth in stormy seas (8)
 - 3 Cross one side of Glasgow (8)
 - 4 Involved in a quest for relics of a bygone age (8)
 - 5 Light sleep? (9)
 - 6 Given an income, but at the finish was in debt (7)
 - 9 Descriptive of a sophisticated traveller? (7-4)
 - 15 A verse that's initially puzzling (8)
 - 16 All the Walrus and the Carpenter managed to eat (8)
 - 17 Almost tropical variety of fruit (7)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,660

- 18 Got to the point — surmed up without a word of hesitation (7)
- 20 Becoming respectable (8)
- 21 Small pet for soldier in Cornish town (6)

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